

# Growing Up In University School

## Books By Robert Butche

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Straight Talk About Education

Robert W. Butche

# Growing Up In University School

An Autobiographical Look Inside  
America's Most Experimental Laboratory School

Second Printing, July 2005

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Dedicated to the Faculty of  
The Ohio State University School  
Who Provided Nearly Two Thousand Students  
An Unsurpassed Educational Experience.



## Acknowledgments



The Author 40 years after Graduating from  
The Ohio State University School

**M**y thanks to Paul Klohr, who, with Craig Kridel, encouraged me to write this book and who drafted or suggested some of the comments about The Ohio State University School. It was Paul who insisted that the book ought to be a very personal autobiography on top of which could be overlaid my quarterly progress reports from OSU Archives. He also helped in editing the manuscript, and developing some of the endnotes and bibliographic information.

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One of the University School teachers in this story, Robert E. Miner, ( Physical Education ) was also an artist. The beautiful

drawing of the former University School building on the cover of this book was drawn by Bob Miner in 1962.

And lastly, Karmella Spears, OSU School of Education Policy and Leadership, who located the vertical records of my schooling which add substance and dimension to this story for future scholars and historians.

My thanks to you all.

Robert Butche  
Greenbrier House  
February, 2005



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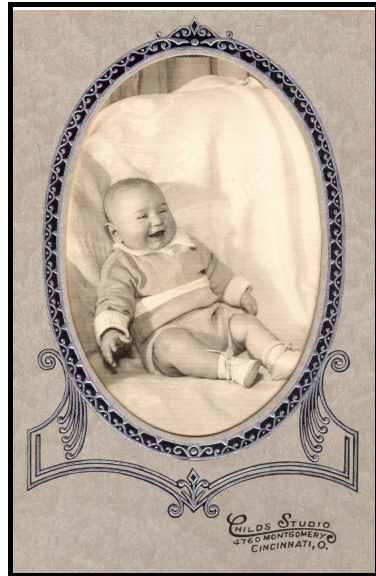
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## Introduction



Robert William Butche,  
in the fall of 1936

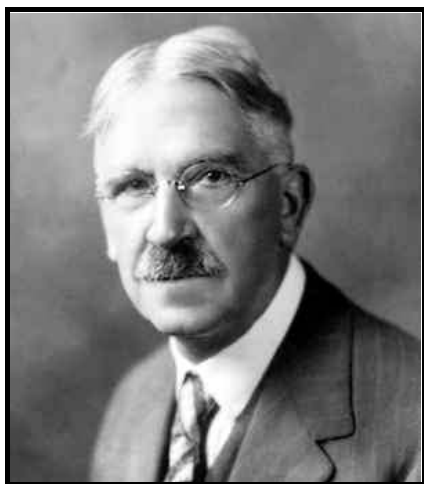
**G**rowing up In University School is, in many ways, a new genre of book – a personal educational anthology. Although it has a solid historical foundation, this is not a history of University School. Nor is it a treatise on the school’s academic qualities or pedagogical methods. A great deal is known and has been written about University School and the twenty-nine other experimental, secondary schools. Those interested in knowing how the school was organized, its pedagogical legacy, or its philosophical foundations will find a wealth of literature about the progressive era, its progenitors and its scholars in most college libraries. So, to put it in simple terms, this book is not about how the car was designed and assembled. It is about what it was like to ride in the car during a very long journey.

To some degree, this is the story of one child’s experiences at one of America’s premiere laboratory schools. But so is it, to a larger degree, about that student’s experiences during the experi-

mental era in American education in the first half of the twentieth century. The realities of University School are not masked in this story – nor are the issues and problems of the American nation during times of turmoil and exhilaration.

### **Experimentalist Era**

University School was perhaps the nation's most experimental school. For those not schooled in education history, a brief



Education Philosopher John Dewey  
Photo: Teachers College

discussion of the era should assist the reader in understanding how and why University School came into being – and the personalities who influenced a very rich era of educational studies.

The first half of the twentieth-century was an exhilarating time in education when the arts and sciences of learning were intertwined with the powerful and enduring philosophical themes central to the American experience. The Experimentalist Era in education began at the turn of the century with the work of John Dewey at the University of Chicago and later at Teachers College. For many educators, this era was an age of discovery – a magical time when anything seemed possible.

Educational experimentalism expanded when many of America's great universities established forward-looking colleges of education. Many of these new schools were free of the regimentation and rote memorization common to public schooling. In the

best of the progressive era schools, scientific investigation, academic idealism and experimentation served to guide the development of more effective, less punitive, methods of learning. By the 1920s, dozens of campus schools had sprung into being. Their missions varied widely, but their overall purpose was to evaluate emerging concepts and methods in education. Most campus based lab schools also served as places where teachers in training developed classroom skills and completed their student teaching requirements.

One of America's new colleges of education was organized at The Ohio State University shortly after World War I. From its very beginning, OSU's college of education began dreaming and planning for its own laboratory school – one that would inculcate its students traditional American values, responsibilities of citizenship, democracy as a way of living, and the sanctity of the individual. A few years after the school was opened in 1932, *Time Magazine* described Ohio State's beautiful new school as "Americas Most Famous School." To some degree, the school's fame came about by way of its innovative ideas and experimental successes, but so did it bask in the success of



Education Philosopher Boyd M. Bode  
Photo: OSU Archives

what John Dewey would later describe as America's foremost College of Education. Still, there was something about University School that set it apart from nearly every other laboratory school of that era. University School was solely a laboratory school – and

never used for student teaching. This provided University School freedom that most other campus schools did not have.

### **Robert's Story**

This story, and the school it showcases, are in some ways bigger than life; evidence of a sometimes troubled and forward looking school. It's no accident that University School was to arise on the great American prairie during a time when America was bent on renewing its vigor after near financial collapse in 1929. By the time Robert's story begins, America was still praying for economic recovery.

The story is told through the experiences of one child, but it is equally a story of great ideas and enduring human values. For here is the full record of one student's real-life experiences in a school modeled on John Dewey's concept of citizen democracy and Boyd Bode's unrelenting confidence in a society steeped in the value of group problem solving.

Robert's childhood biography and the school's assessment of his scholastic progress are connected, but while the biographical story is a moving picture, the archival progress reports about young Robert are not. They are, instead, snapshots of scholastic achievements at more or less regular intervals.

### **Privacy Issues**

Although I invited other former students to participate by way of writing candidly of their own educational experiences and agreeing to include their schooling records in this book, none agreed to do so. Accordingly, the reader may well want to know why I agreed to make something this private a matter of the public record. The answer has two principal elements. First, I am the University School historian, as well as historian of the OSU College of Education. So, I am, to some degree, schooled in the historical importance, methods, goals and personalities involved.

Secondly, my life has been one of great adventure, discovery, success, failure, accomplishment and disappointment.



I have walked with kings, flown with astronauts, enjoyed the fruits of invention, managed large enterprises and served in America's board rooms. I am satisfied that I am fully defined by what I have done as an adult. The child and teenager revealed in this book are no more connected to me today than to you. Although what Robert did and experienced as a child is very familiar to me, I am not the child in this story, and he is most certainly not me. The Robert you read about in this narrative was and remains a child while I am a man whose life experiences and accomplishments he could never have imagined.

### **A Child's Story**

Young Robert and today's Robert are widely separated in time, experience and wisdom. We are separated from one another by half a century, and in some ways, we have lived in entirely different worlds. My world knows about the digital age, terrorism and genocide while his was one of limited technology, economic depression and a massive world war. As a result, recollections about University School reflect both a time and institution that are in the past. To bridge these differences, and to help to make this case study meaningful for future educators and historians, my childhood biographical narrative is detailed and its scope fairly broad.

So, I've chosen to tell this story by way of interwoven threads. The first consists of the autobiographical foundation about what was going on in Robert's life – including family, social issues, political events and certain other external influences. All of these external activities impacted Robert's learning capabilities, motivations, and interests. So too, did the larger issues, world-war, economic stagnation, rampant racism, and limited expectations, shape the lives and expectations of teachers and school administrators.

On top of this narrative are the original progress reports about Robert's scholastic development in the form of letters to

parents at the end of each academic quarter. These reports are presented unexpurgated in the exact order they were written.

### **Not an Ordinary School**

University School was different. Not just from schools of the progressive era, but equally from public schools of the early twenty-first century. Those accustomed to letter grades and competitive measures of academic achievement will not find any such arbitrary quantifications in the school reports on Robert's progress.

Ohio State's University School was one of the most experimental of America's progressive schools. Student progress, as you shall see, was assessed against the student's own potential, not the potential of others nor by arbitrary stratification by grade level. To avoid scholastic competition, grades were not issued, outcomes of tests and examinations were not disclosed, and there were no class rankings

For those schooled where academic achievement was a competitive sport, University School's non-competitive progress assessment methods may, at first, seem lacking adequate motivation, achievement assessment, or clear evidence of accountability on the part of teachers. Contrary to such concerns, Robert's progress reports reveal a meaningful progress assessment administered by hard-working, thoughtful and accountable teachers. More importantly, University School supplemented its written reports with parent-teacher meetings and self-assessment reports to provide both parents and teachers a fuller, more detailed understanding of a student's emerging academic development.

University School's report-card free, non-competitive learning environment was widely known, and often the subject of study, professional articles, and derisive comment. What we learn from the history of the school's 36 years of operation, is that University School was neither lax in academic standards or bereft of curricular foundation. Although rarely reported in the literature, University School's controversial progress assessment model was

cross-checked by way of extensive standardized testing. It also served as a college preparatory school in that many of its students entered colleges and universities – some of the best in the nation.

Many nationally accepted, standardized tests, including the Iowa Silent Reader, and the Stanford mathematics tests were routinely administered to University School students. The results were reported to and widely discussed among the school's administration and faculty, at staff

meetings, and in parent conferences. So, while many believed the school's non-competitive learning environment did not consider either traditional measures of achievement, or nationally accepted scholastic standards, University School students were, in fact, continuously tested and evaluated based on standardized testing and traditional progress assessment tools. What was different at University School was that the results of standardized test results were rarely revealed to students, or used to publically differentiate student progress.

In the progress reports about Robert, we find that he was often at a level below or above what was deemed typical for his age. Today, educators know this is common in children and that very few students are *at grade level* in every subject area. The University School faculty recognized that student progress is rarely the same in all subject areas at any one time, and that academic



Dr. Laura Zirbes, [1884-1967]

Founder, University Elementary School  
OSU Archives

achievement typically occurs in spurts and plateaus common to non-academic childhood development.

**You be the Judge**

Finally, this case-study asks a question, not just for me, but for all of the 1800 students who attended the school between 1932 and 1967. Was University School a significant contributor to our successes in life?

After reading Robert's story, you get to be the judge.

Robert Butche  
Greenbrier House  
February, 2005

## Family Setting



It's a boy, fall, 1936

**M**y story begins at 5:32 a.m. on the morning of Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1936 at the Columbus Radium Hospital on Dennison Avenue – some 12 blocks from the new University School building at Woodruff and High Streets. My parents were George Henry Butche ( 1900-1970 ), and Gretchen Donley Butche ( 1915-1992 ). At the moment I arrived in the world, the closing ceremonies of the 1936 Olympics were already underway in Berlin. By the time Mother and I got acquainted later that day, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was cutting the ribbon that opened the Oakland Bay Bridge to automobile traffic.

The summer of 1936 was a very hot one in Columbus. There was no such thing as air conditioning in hospitals in 1936 –



Gretchen Donley  
ca 1934

which is noteworthy only because the temperature at dawn the morning I arrived was already 82 degrees. On the first day of my life, Columbus set it's all time high temperature record for the date at 106 degrees. Mother said I came into the world cranky and never fully recovered. She was only partly joking.

My father, George, was a machinist at the Columbus Works of the Timken Roller Bearing Company on E. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue – not far from where my parents lived in a small apartment on N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. It had been so hot that summer that my mother, then

just 21 years of age, spent the last two weeks of her pregnancy sleeping in the milk cooler at the Hamilton Milk Dairy at E. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and N. Fourth Street. She was lucky that one of my father's friends worked as a dairy delivery driver.

### **Family Foundation**

My family came into being during the Great Depression era – a time when nearly half of the American workforce was out of work and sinking into poverty. We were lucky – for my father, then thirty-six, had a full time job. Although my father was employed, our family, like nearly every family trying to survive the depression, had no financial cushion. My arrival, in my parent's second year together, was an expensive luxury.

Typical of most depression struck families of that era, Robert was destined to be an only child. We were far from being

well-off, but if we were poor, I never knew it. The year I arrived, my father earned seventy-five cents an hour at the Timken Company, and brought home about \$50 every two weeks. Our apartment on N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street rented for \$21 a month. My dad owned his own car, a 1937 Ford two-door, for which he paid, in cash, the handsome sum of \$600 the day he drove it off the lot. In those days, borrowing money to buy a car was the exception, not the rule.

### **Hard Times**

Life was tough for the vast majority of American families during the second term of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It became vastly more difficult for our family in May of 1937 when my father was diagnosed with Tuberculosis. At that time, TB was a devastating lung disease and so highly contagious that people with the disease were forcefully hospitalized. My father was thus institutionalized at the Benjamin Franklin Tuberculosis Hospital on Alum Creek Drive. The good news was that my dad's hospital care, which would continue for three years, was paid for by the county. The bad news was that in the midst of the



Young Robert – 1937



Benjamin Franklin Tuberculosis Hospital, 1930

Photo: Columbus Public Libraries

depression, the family's only breadwinner was suddenly gone. There was no such thing as welfare in that era, and given that both sets of grandparents were from similarly poor families, my mother had to give up our tiny apartment in Columbus to move in with her sister ( Alma Tracy Hohenshil ) at their small home in far away Canton, Ohio. Alma and Carl Hohenshil also had a son, Jay with whom I was raised as a brother until my father was released from the Tuberculosis sanatorium in late summer of 1940.

We had nothing but my mother's small suitcase and the clothes on our backs when we arrived at my aunt's home in Canton that summer. No more had we unpacked, than mom was in the job market. To support herself and me, my mother had to find work. Although women were rarely hired in industrial plants prior to World War II, my mother held out hope that the company my father had worked for most of his adult life, the Timken Roller Bearing Company, would give her a break. Little did she understand the rigors – not to mention the male oriented nature of the industrial workplace, nor, for that matter, that the Timken Company was itself facing a depression-era struggle to survive.



The worst of the bad news facing my mother was the United Steelworker's decision to strike Timken, and other steel-makers in northern Ohio that year. Hurting from the depression, Timken's unionized workers struck for higher wages. Labor strife in the late 1930's was marked by widespread violence on both sides. For women, finding industrial work of any kind in the 1930's was difficult, if not impossible. In the era before Rosie the Riveter and women's rights, married women were expected to stay home and tend to the needs of their families. But my mother was desperate to keep her family together until my father could return to work. Had she fully understood that eighty percent of tuberculosis patients died in sanatoriums, and that heavy industrial companies like Timken didn't want any women in their factories, it would have made no difference. She had little understanding of what was happening outside our bleak existence, including the fact that Timken was losing money – especially overseas – and was accordingly ill prepared to pay its factory workers higher wages.

Timken's union breaking strategy was to hire replacement workers for its Canton bearing plant from the thousands of men left jobless by the depression. Given the strong union loyalty of steel industry workers in Canton in 1937, getting the steel workers out of the Timken company would not be easy. For one thing, for job hun-



Carl and Alma Hohenshil  
ca 1957



Bobby, Gretchen, with Jay Hohenshil on  
back porch of my aunt Alma's home in  
Canton, Ohio. Fall, 1938

gry steel workers with families, the risk of violence and the stigmatism that would result from taking “scab jobs” at Timken was more than sufficient to keep most of Timken jobs unfilled. Timken was desperate to rid itself of the United Steel Workers that year. For the company, the decision was simple: Hire anyone who was willing to cross the picket line.

If Timken were to hire her, my mother felt she had no choice but to take the risks. Even as I grew up I heard her tell the stories, over and over again, about how terrified she was the morning she arrived at the Canton Bearing plant just before the 6:30 a.m. day shift. Although women would not ordinarily have been hired for factory work under any circumstances in the 1930s, Timken was in no position to be choosy that morning – for fewer than 100 workers, including three women, applied for the hundreds of jobs Timken had available. Mom was hired as soon as she had crossed the picket line where she was physically attacked and admonished that her children would be killed in retribution for her becoming a ‘scab’. She might have been scared, but times were tough – and she did not waver.

To reduce picket line confrontations, some Timken workers were given the choice to stay inside the plant – an option my mother foolishly chose absent any understanding that the strike would go on for many weeks. After only one night, Timken wisely decided that only the men could stay in the plant overnight. The

reasons were obvious, yet Timken's decision that it would be the women, and not the men, who would have to brave the picket line each day put us all at considerable risk. Given the severity of labor strife in 1930s America, my aunt and uncle shared not just their home with us, but suffered the notoriety of being a 'scab house' and thus undertook the very real risks attendant to aiding and abetting



Glenn Volzer and Bobby Butche on Jay Hohenshil, Canton, 1939

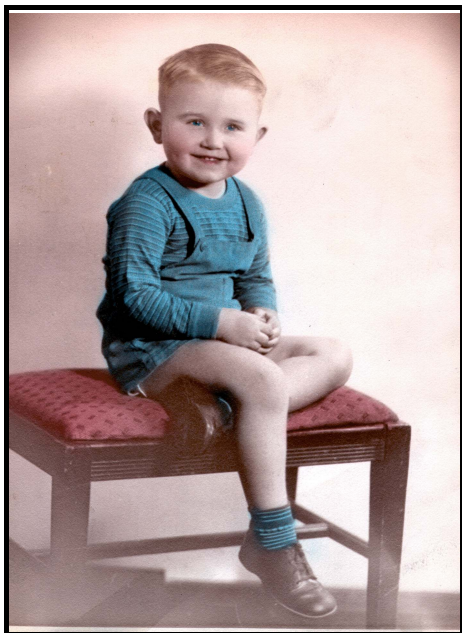
strike breakers. No matter, the strong family relationships on my dad's side of the family, it would be the support and commitment by the Hohenshils' that proved steadfast and unfaltering.

When the steel-workers strike was finally settled, mom had more money in her hands than she had ever seen – some \$800 in cash – including a small bonus for her loyalty to the company. The money covered about what she owed for the expenses that had been accumulating since my father's incarceration at the tuberculosis sanatorium. After the strike was over, mom continued to work at Timken's Canton Bearing Plant until my father's release from the Benjamin Franklin sanatorium in the spring of 1940.

### **Family Reunited**

In the summer of 1940, the Butche family was reunited. The first thing my parents did when my father drove his old '37 ford to Canton, was to go on a long delayed honeymoon to Niagra Falls. I cried my heart out at the screen door of my aunt's kitchen when both my parents drove off and left me.

A couple of weeks later, we returned to Columbus where we would live in an apartment at 95 E. First avenue. Fortunately my father's skills and seniority earned him a return to his tool maker position at Timken's Columbus Bearing plant – where, as a result of the strike, he would now be paid the handsome sum of \$150 per month. Life was looking up for the Butche family, and Columbus was once again our home.



Robert Butche - age 3

Our First Avenue apartment was only about eight blocks from the Timken factory in Columbus and, in what might have passed for rampant inflation in the waning years of the depression, our rent had gone up to \$30 a month. We were poor, but so were we lucky that my father had survived tuberculosis and had been able to return to work. In the years before pneumonectomy surgery was developed, damaged lungs were routinely collapsed by inserting fluid into the lung cavity by way of a

long painful needle inserted between the ribs. My father endured this procedure every two weeks as a condition for release from the sanatorium. His lung doctor was Dr. Karl Peter Klassen, a soon to be world famous lung specialist and surgeon at the Ohio State University College of Medicine.



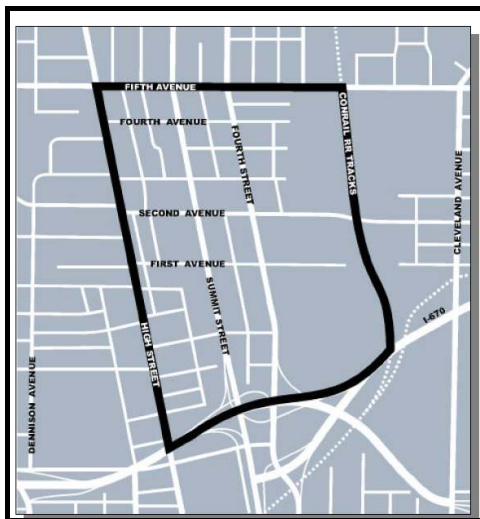
Our apartment building at 95 E. First Avenue

### **Neighborhood Influences**

We lived near downtown, in a predominantly Catholic neighborhood on the edge of Columbus' Italian community. The apartment was chosen by dad before he came to Canton. His decision was largely economically driven. Italian village was not the place one might expect to find a Methodist family. It wasn't that religion was so important in our family setting, for it wasn't. My dad's family was anti-everybody – especially Catholics and blacks. My mother's Protestant Irish family was equally un-accepting of Catholics.

There was a perfectly respectful Methodist Church three blocks away at Third Avenue and High Street. Even before we were fully settled, my mother took me to Sunday School and church. Although my parents soon dropped out of church, I was expected to go every Sunday morning by myself. If I timed it just right, I could cut out early from the Methodist church service and sometimes connect with playmates who were by then heading to Sacred Heart for late Sunday Mass.

Our First Avenue neighborhood was mixed – and in some ways highly categorized. Our apartment was little more than a hundred feet from Summit Street – the dividing line between our



Italian Village - Columbus, Ohio  
Map: Columbus Department of Development

mixed neighborhood and Italian Village. Beginning at Fifth Avenue, Italian Village spread southward along High, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> streets toward Goodale Street and the railroad yards. Goodale Street, west of High Street was largely a shanty town environment known as ‘fly-town’ in the WWII era. Unlike the east side of High Street, W. Goodale was populated mostly by poor

black families, and itinerants. Fly town was shunned by whites, and both the fly-town area and its black inhabitants were held in contempt – especially by poor whites trying to get a foothold on the economic and social ladder that defined America in the first half of the twentieth century.

In that era, the street you lived on, or sometimes even the block you lived in, defined where you stood in the community. While our First Avenue apartment was clearly a cut above fly-town, and a step-up from where we had lived previously on North Fourth Street, we were looked down upon, not just by other factory labor families, but in many ways by my dad’s siblings. Social status in the years before World War II was seen through a complicated filter that considered socioeconomic, neighborhood and educational status – and we scored poorly on all. Although we were mainstream, that is to say we were not ethnic, in Columbus, our family was unmistakably in the lowest class: poor, undesirable, white Protestants.

Although I had no inkling of our low status, my parents did – and it colored their self respect and significantly impacted their treatment of me.

The apartment complex on East First Avenue bordered on a factory along the rear that faced toward one of the very poorest, Italian, working class neighborhoods north of downtown. Our neighborhood was widely viewed as being composed of ‘white trash’ by people who lived only one or two blocks away. Although I came to understand that my family was only transient in this neighborhood, so did I soon discover that most of those living outside of our small apartment complex were both poor and, in some ways, trashy themselves.

### **Prejudice and Bigotry**

Given the open prejudices of those times and the stigma of the neighborhood where we lived, I came to know the ugly jargon of bigotry used by adults that put down those unlike us well before I found there were similar prejudicial terms used to describe my family and our neighbors. By the time I was five years old I was very familiar the terms one might use for identifying blacks, Catholics and Jews. Mindless bigotry was so rampant in World war II America that even a five-year old understood the shadings of meaning between calling someone a nigger, spade, coon or Negro. Although our family, especially my dad’s brothers, spoke in crude terms about other groups –

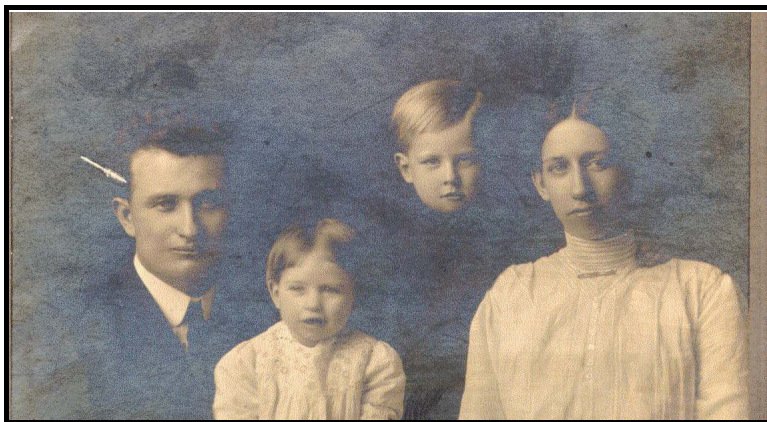


Christmas 1944: My dad is seen behind my neighborhood playmate Buddy Hitchcock holding our second dog, Zoonie.

especially blacks – such discourse was considered common, polite conversation in white America before the civil rights movement.

*Nigger* was used to derisively describe any group of blacks, not just as to their racial make-up, but more importantly to convey disrespect, hatred and superiority over an entire group of people. *Spade*, on the other hand, applied to black men without visible means of support, while coon was used in our neighborhood to describe uneducated or disagreeable blacks. Negro, however, was used to describe black people of standing, that is, those who were either educated, or held positions or jobs of higher status or pay, or who, at least in our family, to identify those who were personally known to us.

Thus Essie, a poor black lady who looked after me before going to school for nearly two years was always “The Negro lady who comes to take care of Bob.” She was never referred to by any slur, although my parents frequently described blacks encountered at work with crude terms common to working class people of that era.



Valdamer Donley, Madie Holmes Donley  
Maternal Grandparents  
with my uncle Granville and aunt Alma  
Portsmouth, Ohio, 1914



As with any other child that age, I adopted both the attitudes and language that I heard at home and on the street. In our neighborhood, we were taught to hate all Jews, niggers, spics, dagoes, wops and anyone or any family different, by way of ethnic identification, use of foreign language or dialect, or religion. Unlike a sizeable number of our Italian neighbors, many of whom used English as a second language, most of those in our local neighborhood were distinctly American, that is white, Protestants who spoke the bland English of the American prairie. Being ‘real’ Americans, we knew we were better and we acted like it. Thus I was terribly surprised, in the year before I started school, to find that among my three closest Catholic friends, all of their families considered me an undesirable outsider. One of these families was first generation Italian Americans who lived across the dividing line, one Irish Catholic who lived on our ( west ) side of Summit Street, and our next door neighbor’s son, of Irish catholic heritage, all had different names for Protestants in their midst.

My parents, well indoctrinated in the mindless dislike of dissimilar peoples, would have skinned me had they known I had gone to church with my Catholic playmates, splashed holy water on my face and kneeled in the pews of a Catholic church. I was not yet six years old – but already a master of living in a world adjusted to my own needs. One of the lessons learned was the adjustment of one’s vocabulary and attitudes to fit different social situations. When my father and his brothers would rail about the foreigners, spics, dagoes and niggers I wanted to join in, but I was still too young to understand that my closest friends were spics and dagoes. I don’t know what their family might have called us, but racial and ethnic slurs were loosely and indiscriminately applied in my father’s extended family.

### **Setting Me Free**

Perhaps one of the greatest accomplishments of University School has never been fully recognized – and that was its ability to set its students free of the dehumanizing bonds of bigotry and

ethnic distrust. As I progressed through the school, my own acceptance of others sometimes ran headlong into my parents' long held beliefs. While my parents views moderated as my own acceptance of others became more vocal, there was an event during my high school years that brought my parents face to face with their own narrow views of society.

One of my high school friends was David Coplon, son of one of Columbus' wealthy Jewish families. David was a neat kid, thoughtful and very accommodating to work with. Although he was badly crippled by cerebral palsy that left him spastic, his mind was as fresh and engaging as any of his classmates. David's body was difficult to manage – a condition that made him awkward, unsteady of gait, and slow to talk.

One day, I invited David to come home with me to work on a project in which we were engaged at that time. Our project took several hours of effort during which my parents came home from work. When we had finished work on our project and David had gone, my mother told me, "We don't want to see people like that around here. What will the neighbor's think?"

"David's a classmate and one of my friends from school – he's okay."

"He's Jewish, Bob."

"Oh, my God!," my mother would forever remember me exclaiming that day, "And I thought he was crippled!"

Dave Coplon remained one of my friends all through high school and subsequently visited our home without comment.

I will forever be grateful to University School for making it possible for me to enjoy the lifelong benefit of knowing and accepting people for who and what they are.

### **Learning About Life**

There were twelve apartments in our complex, six on each side. Each consisted of around 900 square feet of living space on two floors plus a full basement for the furnace and laundry equipment. Downstairs was a small living room and dining room

as well as our tiny kitchen area. Upstairs were two bedrooms and bathroom. Our apartment was heated with coal which was delivered to a wood enclosed bin in our basement by way of a long chute. My dad, and eventually me as well, would shovel coal into the furnace. Then, when the coal had been burned, we had to clean out the ashes and haul them upstairs to be dumped into the trash. The apartment was comfortable most of the time in the winter and hot and miserable in the summer.

Our neighbors were largely other factory workers. Although my dad worked at Timken, most of the other men in our apartment community worked at the Jeffery Manufacturing Company, just two blocks away. Jeffrey was a producer of heavy mining machinery used in the coal mines of Pennsylvania and Ohio. No one was the least bit affluent. Still, nearly everyone who lived in the apartments felt that they were, for one or another reason, only temporarily relegated to low class status.

The apartments were owned by Mr. Palmer, a well known Columbus business man who also controlled the Palmer-Donovan Manufacturing company on Olentangy River Road near Goodale Street. He rented the apartments himself and came by each month to personally collect the rent. He was a large friendly man widely regarded by his tenants as both a skinflint and opportunist. He ran a well controlled cash business and was quick to evict anyone who failed to meet their commitments. As a result, most of our neighbors were stable, hard working families – which was different from many of the households that surrounded us.



Pauline Donley [1923-1936]  
My aunt drowned on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July,  
six weeks before I was born.

I played with many children in the neighborhood. One family that lived on our street, several houses away, had four children all under the age of six. They were one of many very distressed families who lived on our street, but having four children, and a father who was frequently incarcerated in the county jail for drunkenness and violence, relegated them the poorest of the poor. They were from Kentucky, as I recall, and their cleanliness and behavior were unusual to say the least. Even their behavior in the home was far beyond what would be considered either normal or acceptable even in the far more open attitudes of America in the twenty-first century.



Sacred Heart Church

Photo: Catholic Diocese of Columbus

One day, while I was at their small rented house playing with the other children, the parents had a fight. It scared me, but the other children took little or no note of it. When it was over, the parents undressed, climbed onto the dining room table and engaged in very athletic sexual activity for what seemed to a five year old a very long time. I thought the sexual activity was still part of the fighting, and although we all stopped playing occasionally to watch the commotion and noise coming from the dining room table, all of the other children behaved as if this were very ordinary.

I had observed my parents in the few months since our family was reunited, and although they argued from time to time, I had never seen anything either as noisy or violent as what was happening in the adjacent room that morning. I didn't know what

was going on, but I was certain I had never seen anything like this at our house. Nor had I ever seen my father, or any of his brothers drunk either, for that would not have been acceptable in our family setting. Yet, these people were drunk and oblivious to the children present even as they may well have been making more of them.

In speaking of this event later, the only girl child in the family, who was my age, described the activity as “buggying.” Well, now I knew. Perhaps I didn’t know exactly what I knew, but I sensed it was not something I would see very often at my house.

The next morning, while playing in the back yard of the same family, the girl asked me to “buggy” with her. It was summer, and we weren’t wearing all that many clothes to begin with, but she took me into her dad’s tool shed, where we rubbed our tummies together in the innocence of five year olds. While I suspect that she was as bored by the silliness as much as I, one of her brothers had alerted her dad who soon ripped open the door to the shed and hit me so hard I landed outside. The screaming and shouting that ensued was heard throughout the neighborhood and soon involved my parents. I had no idea what was going on, why I had been hit by my playmate’s father, or for that matter, why my dad violently beat me when he arrived home from work. While my dad was passive and not at all prone to violence, at my mothers behest, I experienced violence at the hands of my father several times thereafter.

In the years after we moved back to Columbus, I developed a speech impairment whenever I was under stress. Although I could stutter most anytime on *plosive* sounds, at times when I was trying to talk fast, felt threatened, at risk, or stressed by what was going on around me, my means of verbal communication was decidedly hampered by my speech-impairment. For the most part, I didn’t stutter badly while playing in the neighborhood, but in the company of adults, and at school, it increasingly became a problem.

### **Nation at War**

I was an outgoing kid who knew nearly everyone in the neighborhood. I liked to listen to the radio serials in the afternoon including Tom Mix, Superman and Captain Midnight. In the evenings the family frequently listened to the radio together. Although my father preferred the comedies, Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Amos 'n Andy, Burns and Allen, and Eddie Cantor, my mother preferred the dramatic programs that told of a more affluent America our family aspired to be part of. Lux Radio Theater was her favorite, and we listened to it every week. Radio entertainment was augmented by weekly outings to a second-run movie, usually at the State Theater on North High Street only three blocks from University School.

One snowy December night, as we were leaving the State Theater after a double feature headed by The Maltese Falcon, we could hear newsboys out on High Street calling out, "Extra! Extra. Read all about it – Nips Attack US at Pearl Harbor." My dad bought a paper and soon we were headed toward where he had parked his 1937 Ford on nearby 12<sup>th</sup>

avenue. Just then there was a terrible explosion in one of the buildings facing High Street. An unlit gas water heater had exploded with such force that it blew out the entire back wall of the apartment complex. For me, the explosion seemed somehow related to the war. By the time we were in the car, fire apparatus had arrived on the scene significantly delaying our departure.



Our 1937 Philco Radio

Photo: Radio History

Although it was clear to me that Pearl Harbor was far away, at age five, I also thought my grandparents lived far away in nearby Delaware, Ohio.

By spring, the US Navy completed expansion of its manufacturing facilities at Port Columbus where Curtiss-Wright



Our Family Car - 1937 Ford V8  
Photo: Ford Archives

would build carrier based aircraft for the war in the Pacific. On the day Curtiss-Wright opened the plant, my mother was at their employment office seeking one of the high paying factory jobs. To

her disappointment, Curtiss-Wright was hiring women only for the lower paying office jobs. She took the office job, but when the era of Rosie the Riveter spread through America's war plants a few months later, my mother became an expediter in the factory at nearly double her office salary.

### **Disaster on Second Avenue**

On August 16<sup>th</sup> of 1942, I turned six years old. A day later, the first American bombing raids began in Germany. As fall neared, everyone knew the country was in a gigantic struggle with an uncertain outcome. With the country now fighting on two fronts, men from our neighborhood had gone to battle, and one of my uncles was soon to depart, Columbus, and my family adopted a far more serious attitude. I didn't know what war was, but even at age six, I knew it portended bad things to come.

When school opened, my mother walked me to Second Avenue Elementary school one block north of our apartment. There she enrolled me in Miss Lewis' first grade class. I was excited at the prospect of going to school for all of my friends were doing the same that fall. Neither Miss Lewis nor I was prepared for what would follow that first semester – or for that matter, the important role she would play in my life.

Columbus Public Schools of that era were not geared to deal with misfit students – especially first graders. I had two major problems that semester. The first was that I had a voracious interest in nearly everything – something my parents never noticed and surely didn't want or need in their lives. The second was that I loved school – although unfortunately, not Miss Lewis' first grade – which bored me. I, foolish child that I was, found third grade work, where they had globes and maps of the world beyond Columbus far more interesting.

Miss Lewis, no matter her good intentions, was bound by standard procedure. Even though she recognized my needs were beyond what would be available at Second Avenue School, she was constrained by the inflexibility of public schooling. Although I might clearly have passed the third grade that semester, had I been able to read very well, I was well on my way to failing the first semester of the first grade. If left to go to the bathroom, I was prone to return to or hang around the third grade just down the hall. I was fascinated at what they were studying about the world I heard so much about on the radio. Besides, in the third grade no one was being asked to recite the alphabet, or to read from uninteresting stories about Dick and Jane and farm animals.

My parents were chagrined that their burdensome child was so stupid he couldn't even pass the first semester of first grade. I was ridiculed, chastised and threatened for my failure and made to feel unworthy and very guilty. All of my playmates were doing well, Buddy was in my class at Second Avenue and Jimmy at Sacred Heart. The Pumphrey girls appeared to be superstars to my



parents. Everyone in the neighborhood soon knew that Bobby Butche was a big problem – and a failure.

Neither of my parents had advanced education although both had graduated from high school. No one in our family read for fun or entertainment – although we did subscribe to the *Columbus Citizen* newspaper and *Life* magazine. We had no books in the house, and no one in our family, on either side, was either a reader, intellectually oriented, or seemingly interested in anything beyond daily routines of living. It is clear, however, that the limited view of and interest in life was widely shared by everyone who lived in our neighborhood as

well as my parents' friends. Perhaps it was the result of the depression, or simply the expected mentality, or life-style impressed upon factory workers of that era, but, intellectual curiosity, creativity, and abstract analysis of life problems and



Sunday Dinner – 1944

Gretchen, George Leah and Walter Butche

relationships were never visible. Radio and movies were what helped to lift our family out of what I later came to understand was a widely held anti-intellectual attitude on both sides of the family. My father's side of the family, with so many siblings, was one of continuing conflict that fed on the smallest and least significant issues and ideas. Verbal altercations were common, with one or more siblings ending up not speaking to one another. One such argument created a feud that lasted until the death of everyone involved. Emotions were what drove behavior and decision making.

On my mother's side, with only three siblings, one of whom was off to war in Europe, things were far less stressful and argumentative. Still, it was emotions that drove nearly all family discussion and relationships.

Into the lives of these hard working, honest, people of strong values, powerful family attachments, and limited education, had come Robert. A curious, demanding, omnivore who wanted to know about everything, and experience all that life might offer. Even as a six year old, I knew that I was different. I didn't know how or why I was different, but I knew and clearly acted as if I were superior to others. It was very bad manners, to say the least. It stressed my family, caused me reoccurring punishment for my behavior, and mystified my playmates. I was, as are so many children who don't fit the standard cookie-cutter expectations befitting their age or status, a misfit and a problem.

Still, life was looking up for the Butche family that year. My parents decided it might be good for me if we had a dog. Soon, Vicky, a 12 week old Cocker Spaniel showed up at our small apartment. I was thrilled. Vicky and I were immediate best friends and we played together constantly. One day that summer, Mom gave me a freshly peeled whole peach with my lunch. I knew that until it disappeared that I would be held hostage at the kitchen table, so when mom wasn't looking, I threw the peach out the back door. Later that afternoon my mother let Vicky out the screen door on our small back porch. While unattended, he ate the peach, stone and all. By evening he was in serious trouble, but having no money for veterinary services, my dad put off taking the dog for treatment until the next morning. By then, Vicky was unconscious. Shortly after taking Vicky to a veterinarian the next morning, dad returned home with the bad news. Vicky was dead, and I had killed him. The beating that followed was nothing compared to my sense of guilt.

### **Disengagement with School**

Well before the end of my first semester at Second Avenue School, Miss Lewis invited my parents to discuss Robert's seeming disengagement with the rote methods of public school instruction. Robert, she told them, would not be successful in the Columbus Public Schools. What he needed, she explained to my mystified and increasingly worried parents, was an environment where he could learn at his own pace. Although she may have thought she made clear I needed a more challenging schooling environment, my parents believed I was more than a little slow for my age. Rather than agree to a change in schools, they chose to motivate me through series of painful spankings aimed at clarifying what was expected of me. All I had to do was to act and behave as a first grader.

Had they listened closer to what Miss Lewis was telling them, they might have come to understand that, unlike most six year olds, Robert had a mind of his own.

"It's clear," she might have told my parents, "Robert is knowingly uncooperative and not at all inclined to study things that do not interest him." That too, my parents were certain, could be corrected by making the consequences of Robert's undesirable behavior increasingly violent and painful.

When my disengagement with and growing dislike for school continued into the cold weather months, Miss Lewis insisted that I be withdrawn from school before I discovered or understood that I was failing. Letting a child of my capabilities fail, she assured my parents would have serious long-range consequences. What to do? my parents remembered asking Miss Lewis. Little did they know that she had not only considered the alternatives, but she had called Dr. Robert Gilchrist, Director of Ohio State's University School, to see if they might have an interest in a youngster with Robert's potential. At the next parent teacher conference, Miss Lewis told my mother she knew a school where students like Robert could develop at their own pace – faster in some areas than others. Unfortunately, my mother discovered,

University School was operated somewhat like a ‘private’ school in that it charged tuition.

Tuition for schooling was a giant problem to my parents. Nevertheless, at Miss Lewis insistence, I was immediately withdrawn from the Columbus Public Schools while my parents attempted to get me enrolled in the Ohio State University School.

They met with Dr. Gilchrist over the Christmas break. A day later, my mother took me to the school to be interviewed by Dr. Gilchrist. We spent over an hour together in his office before he gave my mother the good news. “Robert is absolutely amazing”, my mother later recalled him telling her, “but did you know that he cannot spell a single word, or even recite the alphabet?”

“Well, he’s failing the first grade,” my mother recalled assuring him.



Robert Gilchrist, [1907-2002]  
circa 1944 - Photo: OSU Archives

Then came some good news. Gilchrist told her “We’d like for Robert to come to University School. Unfortunately, there are no positions available in the first grade, and with the war and all, we cannot take him this year.” Little did my mother understand what she was being told. University School had financial and staffing problems of its own in the midst of World War II – which would directly impact me.

### **Budget and Personnel Limitations**

Unlike the public schools that were supported by property taxes, University School was part of a giant university whose student enrollment had dropped over a third and whose continuing legislative support was uncertain at best. The university was perilously close to financial insolvency. Bob Gilchrist was trying to keep University School functioning with reduced staff, male teachers and even some upper school students off at war, and with a shrinking budget. Gilchrist had no discretionary funds or, for that matter, sufficient resources to maintain the school's full program during World War II. Class sizes were strictly limited, and no matter how much Gilchrist might have wanted to see me in school that year, the limitations of war argued otherwise.

So, while Bob Gilchrist agreed to admit me to University School, there was no place for me that year. Perhaps the next fall, he told my parents, if there were any withdrawals from the class that would become second graders in 1943, he might be able to



Original Architect's Rendering  
The Ohio State University School  
Drawing: OSU Archives

work me in. Unfortunately, there was already a waiting list for admission to that class, but Gilchrist had held a place open for me in the first grade class of 1943 just in case.

Gilchrist understood that my enrollment in the first grade was a concession to war time pressures on the university, but my parents clearly understood that their son was being held back. To them, the truth about their son was now known. Robert Butche had failed the first grade. He was argumentative, increasingly uncooperative, and it may have seemed to them, likely be burden for life. While my enrollment at University School became widely known within the extended families, no one was to know that George and Gretchen's son was so dumb he had failed the first grade.

### **Family Pressures and Finances**

By the time I began first grade at University School, the war had expanded to the point of becoming the singular focus of nearly all Americans. Finances remained tight in our family until Mom landed the expeditor job for which she was to be paid seventy-five cents an hour – men's wages in the early years of World War II. The Butche household income jumped by \$37.50 a week – just in time for all of the expenses attendant to Robert going to University School.

The first grade tuition at University School came to \$40 each quarter including lunchroom fee. Forty dollars was a major outlay in our household, but my parents never considered asking for a fee wavier, although nearly half of all University School students attended on such waivers to preserve balance and diversity. From today's perspective, it is difficult to understand the customs, social pressures, and values systems typical of financially stressed families in the years after the depression, but self-respect and paying one's own way was extremely important in the era before family assistance and welfare became the social norm. My parents, perhaps thinking how lucky they were that the university was going to have to deal with me, scrimped for years to pay my tuition – something I was frequently reminded about. No matter



Streetcar #760 on N. High Street during World War II.

Photo: Columbus Metropolitan Libraries

that the world around them changed in the years after the war, my mother continued to work and my parents paid my University School tuition every quarter until I graduated with the class of 1954. They couldn't afford it, but they did it.

In August of 1943 my mother hired Essie, an aging, tall, slender black woman to take responsibility for getting me up on school mornings, fed, and escorted to the streetcar stop little more than a hundred yards from our apartment. Essie showed up very early – even as my parents were leaving for work. She managed, without fail, to get me down to the streetcar stop on time. She spoke to the motorman to be assured that I got off at the right stop, and over the years I came to know him and look forward to visiting with him every morning.

Although a first grader, I was perfectly capable of boarding the rickety streetcar in the middle of High Street and paying the three cent fare for the 17 block trip to the school at Woodruff and High streets. All went well until the first big snowfall when Essie

decided not to come. Undaunted, and loving every minute in Miss Sutton's first grade class at University School, I was out of bed on my own, skipped breakfast, dressed as best I could, put on my coat and boots, and made my way in the dark to the streetcar stop. According to my parents I never told them that Essie had stopped coming, for it was fully a week before they discovered, to their complete horror, that I was going to school absent any adult supervision. No matter that I was clearly capable of doing this on my own, it was unseemly, if not irresponsible to expect a first grader to go to school by themselves.

In a panic, my parents sought out another University School family, one that lived at Third Avenue and Summit Streets, to provide proper parental supervision for me on school mornings. From then on I reported to their home and made the trip to school with them. This required a far longer unsupervised walk each morning, although it carried the imprimatur of adult supervision.

Beginning in 1945, I was permitted to get myself off to school and take the streetcar by myself. I soon became reacquainted with the motorman I liked. Sometimes, much to my delight, he would let me pretend that I was helping him drive the streetcar. He also saw to it that I always got off at Woodruff Avenue. For my parents, the streetcar motorman became my morning adult supervision.

### **The Care and Feeding of an Omnivore**

I don't know what Miss Lewis saw in me, or what Dr. Gilchrist thought I would bring to University School. I was not the smartest student in Miss Sutton's first grade – but I was already an omnivore – a six year old with an unusually wide and varied appetite. Kip Patterson was the smartest and Karen Sperber, the daughter of an immigrant German professor, the best educated. The day Karen arrived in the first grade she was reading in two languages. Kip, Karen and Julie Rains were among those in my class who had spent the previous year in the University School



Kindergarten. Even so, Julie and I were among the non-readers, which seemed to worry our parents more than our teachers.

Bobby Butche was neither the smartest kid, or, for that matter, even modestly educated when he began studies at University School. He was, however, intensely curious, creative in widely divergent areas, cunning, manipulative and determined to get his own way. As he matured, the breadth of his interests broadened as did his abilities to delve into multiple areas of interest.

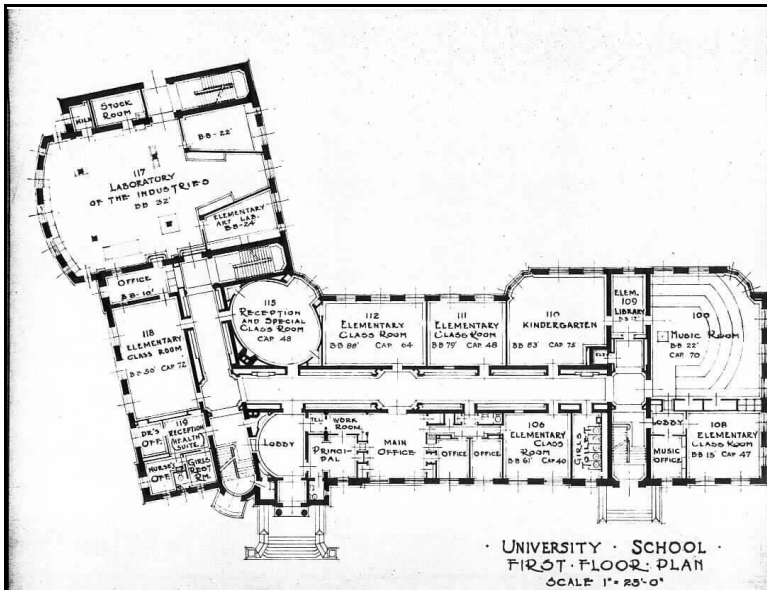
Although I have known and worked with many brilliant people, superlative artists, and some of the richest, most famous and powerful men of the twentieth century, I've only met two men in my adult life whose breadth and depth of interest, knowledge, and intellectual capacity are similar to my own. Neither of these men knows the other, but I believe they each may be acquainted with one or two others of similar intellectual bearing. Both of these men are probably above me in the traditional, narrow view of intelligence. But intellect, I found in these men, is only one dimension of a very complex, multi-dimensional expanse of knowledge, fields of interest and intellectual analysis. For me, conversations with these men quickly develop into a sharing of ideas and knowledge that can quickly explode into far ranging discussions at considerable depth.

One of these men, a close friend for some thirty years, used the term *omnivore* one day to describe the breadth and depth of our shared interests. Although he is an M.D., our conversations can go on for hours as we delve deeply into music, astronomy, physics, politics, psychology, history, art, mechanics, medicine, mythology, pharmacology, electronics, world affairs, computer science and so on. While my knowledge of computer technology is far deeper, his knowledge of quantum electrodynamics and physics quickly makes of him my teacher. Many years ago, I saw Richard Feynman being interviewed by Bill Moyers on PBS. I was fascinated at what this physicist had to say – not just on physics but on a wide range of issues. I told my friend about him and we began to read his books and commentaries. To our delight, it was clear that Richard

Feynman, one of the great intellects of the twentieth century, was an omnivore. His teaching skills were superlative, whether teaching students about the forces of the universe, or teaching himself about anything that interested him.

Two of the qualities of an omnivore are an inner drive to follow one's interests and the ability to self-teach. So, when I use the term omnivore to describe young Robert, it is to describe someone with intellectual curiosity, very broad interests, and unrelenting drive. The young Robert revealed in this book was well above average in intelligence, but he was no Richard Feynman. He was, however, a budding omnivore for whom the University School would become the vehicle of challenge, learning, and self-discovery.

## The Elementary School



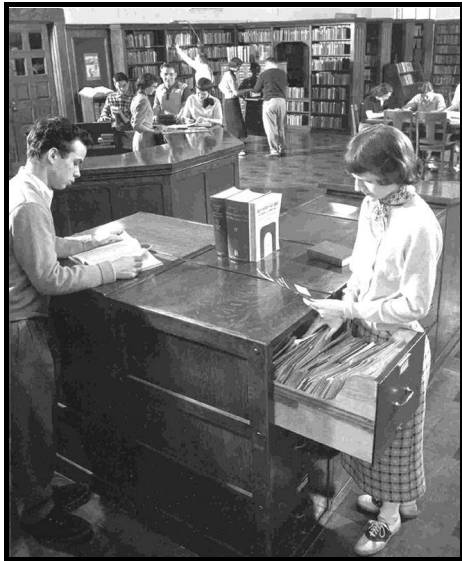
University School Floor plan, First Floor: OSU Archives

## Faculty and Facilities

Grade	Room	Teacher	Class Size	Year
1	112	Margaret Sutton	24	1943-4
2	111	Lillian E. Adams	24	1944-5
3	106	Kathleen Mustaine	24	1945-6
4	108	Eloise Keebler	24	1946-7
5	201	Mary Jane Loomis	28	1947-8
6	215	Mary Jane Loomis	28	1948-9



## The Elementary Grades



The University School Library  
University School Photo by David Curl  
OSU Archives

Since learning how to read is a major goal of any elementary program, the way in which it was nourished during a student's early years warrants attention. In reading skill development, University School was experimental in what some believed to be *radical* ways. Most schools, then and now, purchase graded reading materials from major publishers – a book for each child in each grade. The contents of these books were carefully and scientifically written. The content of the books related to studies that reported the words that children were supposed to recognize at several grade levels. In general, the books were attractive and well illustrated. They lasted several years at best, given the wear and tear of their young users.

Similar sets of books were supplied system wide for social studies, science, and mathematics. Each child would have learned from the same set of books as his classmates did.

### **Teacher Directed Library Support**

University School chose not to use graded texts in favor of



Frieda M. Heller  
University School Librarian  
ca 1948

what came to be known as a free reading program. Frieda M. Heller, a nationally recognized library specialist, in collaboration with each elementary grade teacher, selected appropriate reading materials to provide each classroom a variety of books at three or more reading levels. These books were the best of children's literature. Books used in reading development were appropriate to the elementary level subject fields across a range of difficulty levels. The University School library provided a wide selection of classic and modern books in the expanding field of childhood literature.

Often, the entire class would go to the library to become acquainted with books that Heller personally chose for early readers. The library was thus integrated into every class as Heller and her assistant worked individually with each teacher to provide library support. Librarian Heller was thus *on call* for class visits or conferences with students, sometimes in the classroom and sometimes in the library. Students were encouraged, even in the early grades, to visit the library on their own to consult with Heller.

Class projects, were typically a week or ten days long in the early years, and in the fifth and sixth grades, tended to last as

long as two months or more. This class work involved both extensive reading and writing as well as discussions focused on the problem, or topic, chosen by the children and their teacher.

### **Reading Skill Development**

Learning to read, write, and do arithmetic were central features of class projects, or studies. They provided additional incentives for learning to read and write. However, the most basic incentive was intended to be the joy of reading, itself.

Early in the first grade, students were faced each day with a large, lined chart resting on an easel. The teacher would raise a question such as “What have you seen or done today?” One student might reply “On my way to school I saw a bird making a nest in a tree.” Or, perhaps, “My dad has a new car.” Margaret Sutton, my first grade teacher, might have responded: “Let’s see how that would look on our chart.” In manuscript writing, she would write the statement on the chart large enough for all to see. She might raise questions which would involve writing further words. “What kind of bird do you think it was?” It then might follow that *robin* would appear on the chart after some class discussion. The question and the answer would then be part of the printing on the chart for all to see. There might follow a discussion around the question of “What other kinds of birds do we know?”

This process of developing reading materials close to the child’s experiences might well also lead to the subject matter of the group study for a short period of time. It was also an informal approach to reading, for all of the daily charts were saved and used, from time to time, to have either the class as a whole or individual students read. The students were involved in making their own reading materials. Words from these charts and from class discussions became the spelling lessons. The aim was to make students aware that they could be in charge of learning their language – not only in how it was used, but in writing and spelling.

Students naturally wanted to investigate some of the interesting and beautifully illustrated books from the library.

Sometimes the book would be read to them and, as their confidence grew, to begin to read some of the materials for themselves. Not all of the first and second graders arrived at this point at the same time. Some required individual help from the teacher. At other times, children who were making good progress, helped one of their classmates who was having difficulty in reading or spelling. As we moved through the grades, we were given regular standardized tests to satisfy that the school's reading achievement levels were being met.

Here, for example, are my own Iowa Silent Reading test results as I moved through the elementary grades.

**Robert Butche's Iowa Silent Reading Levels, Grades 2 -6**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Date of Test</b>	<b>Reading Skill Grade Level</b>
Second Grade	October, 1944	2.0
	May, 1945	2.8
Third Grade	October, 1945	1.7
	May, 1946	2.9
Fourth Grade	October, 1946	4.0
	May, 1947	4.4
Fifth Grade	October, 1947	4.6
	May, 1948	5.8
Sixth Grade	October, 1948	6.4
	May, 1949	8.5



### **Progress Assessment**

As with reading, there were no standard texts used in teaching mathematics. Math skills were developed by the teacher from such texts and tests given to the class as a whole. Many math problems arose from group studies underway in the higher grade levels. Some students needed special attention in coping with math problems. This was given to individuals or to several students at a time who were having some difficulty.

Science lessons were pursued in a similar way – questions or problems arose from group study or from individual reading. A science teacher with special competence at elementary grade levels, Lewis Evans, was also available to each class. He often visited in relation to some problem arising from the group study or simply to introduce and discuss some plant or animal from his elementary science laboratory.



College of Education's Physical Education Facilities  
Were housed in Pomerene Hall on Neil Avenue  
Drawing: Spangler Collection - College of Education

### **University Wide Resources**

The OSU campus and the neighborhood around it was a great world to be explored and discussed and written about in *Our Trip* reports. It must have seemed strange to university students in their rush from class to class to encounter a group of twenty children with their teacher, and usually a volunteer parent, crossing the campus en route to some campus site such as Mirror Lake, the bell tower in Orton Hall, or the historical museum at 15<sup>th</sup> and High Street. The early grades enjoyed some university privileges including the use of Pomerene Hall for swimming lessons, and visits to the university farms and dairy. Beyond campus, students often visited the Columbus Zoo, the Ohio Statehouse downtown, the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, the Hartman theater and City Hall. All such trips were material for discussions and written reports to develop further spelling and written language skills.

### **Philosophical and Theoretical Foundation**

There is extensive professional writing about University School's philosophical and theoretical foundation and how they were applied or translated into teaching and curriculum development. The most succinct presentation of this philosophical base is presented in a book published by the school, *The Philosophy and Purposes of the University School* written and updated by the faculty of the school. The publication lists six functions of the school, some of which understandably suggest its relationship to other departments of the College of Education, and others to the public schools of Ohio.

In defining the school's purpose, the faculty wrote:

The University School must be an *experimental* school. It is an experimental school in the sense that intelligent hypotheses for improving education should be tried out carefully, and studied critically, and the program reconstructed in the light of the evidence secured.

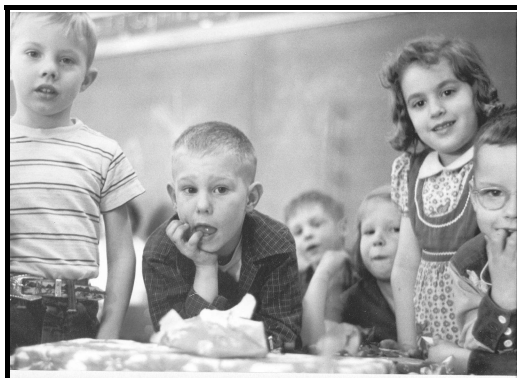
To carry out such a mandated function, the faculty asserted that the school must “establish policies, select learning experiences, and utilize methods of teaching which are consistent with a democratic philosophy.”

In many respects, the school’s efforts to translate its democratic philosophical base into the school’s organization, teaching, curriculum and evaluation was based largely on John Dewey’s work at Teachers College. One of Dewey’s contemporaries, Boyd Bode, Ohio State’s widely recognized philosopher in the College of Education, in many ways a disciple of Dewey, was directly involved in the establishment of the school in 1932.

Both Harold Alberty and Boyd Bode extended Dewey’s thinking, as did the founder of the small elementary school that became a critical part of the K-12 University School, Laura Zirbes.



## Grade One



1940's Kindergarten Classroom  
University School Photo by David Curl  
OSU Archives

*1943-1944*

From my first day, I loved being at University School. My first experience was a physical examination by Dr. Juliet Stanton. I remember standing around in our underwear while we were measured, weighed and evaluated. The School was beautiful – not at all like the rundown building I had attended on Second Avenue. There were about two dozen of us in Miss Sutton's first grade class in 1943. I didn't know it yet, but many of the other children would become lifelong friends. Today, over sixty years later, I regularly see and visit with about half of the children I met that first day at University School.

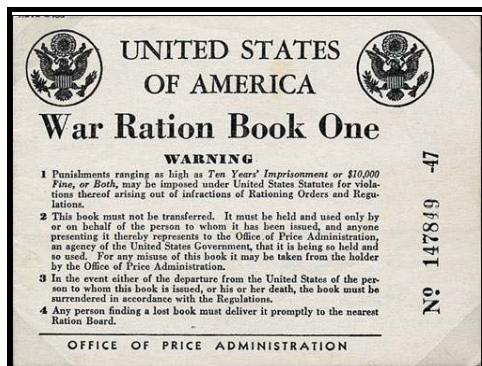
Miss Sutton was young and attractive and well prepared for the likes of us. For one thing, she was more than accommodating to a wide range of individual student needs amongst her first grade class. Our class room ( Room 111 ) was small, and not at all

well suited to elementary school use, for it had no storage area for teaching materials and its green colored blackboards, designed for college use, were so high that we had to use a platform to reach them.

We each had a small chair, and our own floor mat for short morning and afternoon rest periods. Although these rest periods were only about fifteen minutes, they bored me terribly – and it seemed to me they were painfully long. I remember thinking I would have to endure such imposed periods of inactivity all my life. For me, at least, there were so many interesting things to do in Miss Sutton's classroom that not being engaged in school activities all day seemed unfair. No matter how bored I might have been at Second Avenue School, first grade at University School was, for the most part, stimulating and exciting.

### Columbus Goes to War

That summer Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was arrested, only to regain power a few months later when the Germans invaded Rome and restored his government. On my birthday that year, American air forces made their first daylight air raids against Regensburg and Schweinfurt in Germany even as the Allies, lead by General George Patton, reached



WW II Household Ration Book.  
Image: U.S. Library of Congress

Messina, Sicily. Ration books and stamps were issued to every household to limit purchases of scarce goods including staples like sugar, gasoline, meat, women's stockings and cigarettes.

Even first graders were expected to collect monies for US War Stamps and Bonds. To avoid waste, everyone was asked to save rubber bands, tin-foil, and participate in recycling of everything imaginable. My mother and father began a small victory garden, as did all of our neighbors in the apartment complex, in the open field near the *Tin Factory*. She began canning too. All summer long everything mom could get her hands on, tomatoes, green beans, corn, lima beans, fruits, and gallons of tomato juice were prepared, cooked and sealed in large Mason jars.

By fall, Columbus began to participate in regular air raid drills – both at home and at school. That scared me the most, for our apartment was directly under the radio-range approach corridor to Port Columbus, so there were many airplanes passing directly overhead, day and night. The adults knew these planes were not war related, but to a seven year old all planes were potential bombers. When the time came when Columbus' nightly blackouts meant that all lights had to be extinguished, or dense black shades were affixed over windows, I was terrified.

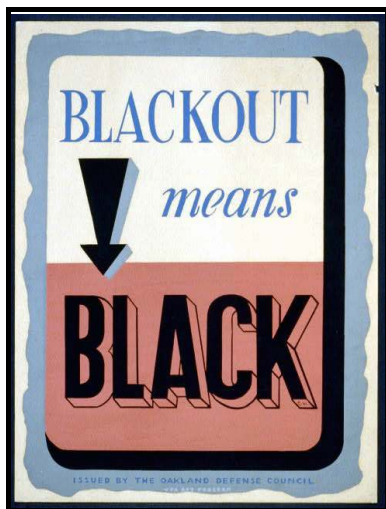
### **For the Duration**

Times were tough in 1943, and even at University School, everyone – especially the faculty, felt the pinch. Even Miss Sutton's first graders came to understand the term, "not available



WW II Defense Bond Poster  
Image: U.S. Library of Congress

for the duration.” Clearly, the stresses of living in wartime Columbus were far more difficult and worrisome for adults, but all of us became familiar with the phrase *for the duration* which recognized that the war would be over eventually, but until then everyone’s life had changed and best we get used to it.



WW II Air Raid Poster

Image: U.S. Library of Congress

The war changed most people’s lives that year. Two families in the apartment complex moved out as men who had not already volunteered were drafted for service. That summer we had new neighbors in the adjacent apartment – two women and one man who traveled extensively. Before long, there were frequent visitors to that apartment every night followed by screaming that reoccurred several times during the night. Although the sound was emanating from the bedroom adjacent to mine, it was sufficiently disturbing to wake my parents as well.

At first, I thought the women were being killed. Fortunately, mother came into my bedroom and assured me that everything was OK and that I should not worry. “Some ladies make a lot of noise like that,” she explained. Soon I began to hear other adults in the complex talk about “getting rid of those tramps.” Still, the problem continued into the fall and winter. I was still too young to understand what was causing all of the commotion and noise. One day Buddy Hitchcock heard his dad telling someone about all that commotion, so Buddy immediately shared the news with me. I was shocked when buddy told me that those people were fighting naked next to where I was sleeping – just like the neighbors had



done down the street. From then on, the cause of my inability to sleep much some nights became my own secret. I couldn't tell anyone – especially an adult – what was going on next door.

One day, I heard my parents tell Mr. Palmer that he had to get rid of those people, but he refused to do so. My dad was angry and he told old man Palmer that these women were charging three dollars – and if Palmer didn't put them out, dad would call the police. By the time I started to University School that fall, there were few nights that I could sleep through the night. Dad, who left for work at 5:30 a.m. increasingly became irritated at the noisy activity next door. The more angry my parents became the more determined I was not to tell anyone what was going on – especially not at school.

At that time, it was not unusual for me to have difficulty going back to sleep after the commotion ended. The ladies had all day to catch up on their sleep, but I didn't. The resulting change in my behavior, attitude and defiance of authority probably suggested to Miss Sutton that I had problems needing attention. She had no idea what those problems might have been, and I was definitely unwilling to reveal what was going on at home. My unwillingness to do so, left Miss Sutton with little alternative. She discussed my problems with others including Assistant Director Ramseyer.

### **First Stanford-Binet**

University School had extensive resources at its disposal within the university community. One such resource, the Department of Psychology, was, like University School, part of the College of Education. The Psychology Department supported the school with a wide range of psychological evaluation and testing services not available to public schools. During autumn quarter, the decision was made to request a psychological work up on young Robert.

In January of 1944, John Ramseyer, then assistant director of University School, scheduled a psychological examination to determine, in part, Robert's level of intelligence. On Thursday,

January 20, 1944 a psychologist came from nearby Arps Hall to administer a Stanford-Binet intelligence test. Neither he nor John

Ramseyer knew of the problems at home and my inabilities to rest at night.



John Ramseyer, Sr. c 1950  
Photo: OSU Archives

When he arrived, we went to another room where he set up his equipment, and prepared me for the test. While I remember the event to some degree, his notes and report give insight into what became an unsatisfactory experience for us both. To begin with, he interviewed me before the test began. His notes make clear that he was not satisfied by the interview, but he continued. Although I was in no condition for a meaningful IQ test, he administering the Stanford-Binet form L test.

The next day he sent his written report to John Ramseyer. It said, in part,

Robert seemed cooperative and willing. He tried hard but attention was easily distracted. He appeared to be quite tired and sleepy – claimed his alarm clock had gone off at 2:30 in the morning and that he had not gone to sleep again after that. There was much yawning and stretching. In addition to this he complained of having a stiff neck. Social-confidence seemed to be somewhat above normal for his age. Self-confidence was about normal.

Several times during the test he brought in descriptions of experiences which he has had. These, apparently, were recognition getting devices. The “sleepy act” may have been a more elaborate example of this. Under better conditions of alertness and attention it is quite possible that he might be able to do better than this test performance indicates.

Although the conditions for the examination were far from optimal, his findings confirmed that I was well above average in intelligence. Although the school was quick to identify my intellectual potential, and my propensity to disregard things which did not interest me, it would be years before my multi-tasking abilities and breadth of interests would be identified. Until then, I was something of an elementary enigma – clearly capable but rarely motivated.

There is no record that the psychological exam quoted above, or its assessment of my intellectual capacity, were ever shared with my parents. Perhaps with good reason. But had my parents known at that age that my IQ was well above average, it might well have alleviated their worries about my scholastic potential. I am confident, however, that the results of this test were fully understood by my teachers as they worked with me. Unfortunately, my parents continued to believe I was always on the verge of failure – which I believed as well.

By the next summer the noisy women next door moved on and we had ‘nice’ neighbors again. Although it was not understood by me, both my parents worked hard to keep us together under very difficult and uncertain circumstances. It is no surprise, that under Miss Sutton, the focus of my life slowly shifted from home to University School. For at school, even during the war, I was nourished far better, intellectually, spiritually and physically, than at home. No matter Miss Sutton’s intentions, limitations on her and the school very often limited just how far the school could let me

progress. Thus, I continued to be often bored, unchallenged and sometimes adrift. My response was to demand attention, take control, act-out, and behave like the seven year old that I was.

### **Discovery and Friend Making**

At University School I made many new friends. Johnny Ramseyer Jr., the youngest child of the school's Assistant Director, was a quiet, well behaved schoolmate. Our play, however, was not always as quiet as Miss Sutton expected. Although I often behaved as a know-it-all, even at that age, I was for the first time making friends outside of my neighborhood. I really liked the girls in the first grade, and I was immediately attracted to Millicent Ramey who became my first girl confidant – and who also remains a friend to this day. Julia Rains also became one of my most treasured life-long friends, and Shirley Stoughton, shy as she was, was destined, to her considerable and blushing embarrassment, to be my first love.

Our class room was immediately across the hall from the administrative offices. Along the back wall were about a dozen folding chairs for visitor use. As a laboratory school, University



School hosted thousands of education students, teachers, school administrators, governmental officials and international visitors each year. Every classroom was a theater of education theory and practice. At first, students found the large numbers of people streaming in and out of the room very disruptive. But, within a few months, the parade of visitors became very ordinary. Perhaps searching for attention, I was particularly drawn to 'entertain-

Millicent Ramey

ing' visitors in our first grade classroom – much to the displeasure of Miss Sutton.

Margaret Sutton was deeply imbued in the student-centered and self-guiding educational philosophy furthered by the founder of Ohio State's elementary school specialist, Laura Zirbes. As a result, I was allowed to spread my wings and devour a wide range of educational opportunities that first year. Of course, I got into trouble, over extended myself, and tried to lie my way out of every scrape, mess, or failure.

I never could have achieved at such a level at Second Avenue School. For me, the University School environment was the difference between great success and abject failure. My needs, however, were far different from most of my classmates. Although Karen Sperber was very shy and dressed and spoke as a European, she was articulate and in many ways sophisticated for her age. Others in our class were self assured in ways I would not achieve for several more years.

Johnny Ramseyer, son of the school's future director, was athletic, smart, and behaved more like an adult than a child. Not me, I was into everything, and when things got too quiet, Kip and I would stir up something we found more interesting. Some of the girls I came to know first, Julie Rains, Millicent Ramey, Jane Bittermann, Shirley Stoughton, Martha Dale and Allison Hedrick were engaging and fun to be around. Martha was a wonderfully animated and engaging black girl whose personality bubbled with laughter. Our class had the largest percentage of African American children ever admitted to the school. Marsha Samuels, and Kay Rita Turner were, like Martha, talented in the arts. Jackie White was a quiet student who went on to become a physician; Don Patterson became a legendary jazz-organist; and big Jim Grant was to find his success in pharmacology.

The cultural diversity in our class was a decided plus for me, for I came from a WASP view of America that disdained Catholics, blacks, foreigners and Republicans. While I heard all of the bigoted comments from my father's friends and brothers, and

I knew well all of the trigger words and phrases applied to them, I was schooled in an environment where everyone was the same. Never were there any bigoted remarks or behaviors at University School. So it was that in the first grade, everyone in the class was to some degree my friend – and all of them esteemed classmates.

### **Road to Life Long Learning**

For the most part, school in Miss Sutton's classroom was interesting. She made the alphabet so interesting for me, by introducing me to the exciting differences between capital and lower case letters, that I began to discover the excitement of reading. When I was bored, she saw to it that I had a suitable alternative activity. I was not alone in getting her attention, for our class had many students with special needs.

Every few weeks Miss Zirbes, a rather large lady with a wide smile, thick glasses, and a large lap came to visit our class. We always knew she was coming, because the teachers told us a very important person was coming to see us. Being both precocious and always seeking adult interaction, I was usually the first to jump on her lap and listen to her talk. Although my recollection was that she spoke of things interesting to first-graders, I have come to understand how these visits were partly an extension of her long engagement in elementary schooling studies, and perhaps, to some degree, her natural maternal instincts. She loved the children – and we all looked forward to her visits with us that year.

My life away from school was far from ideal. With both of my parents working, their time together was limited and sometimes filled with conflict. Money was always an issue – one that would limit my activities for many years. I'm confident that all of the nearby families were in similar financial stress – and that all of my neighborhood friends suffered from most all of the limitations as me. With one exception: My family had to carry the burden of having me enrolled in a school they never really understood, and for which they had to make many sacrifices.

### **Home Life**

From the time we moved back to Columbus, my neighborhood friends consisted of Buddy Hitchcock, Jimmy Esselstine, Tommy Childers, the Shonk brothers, Cyrus Graham, and the four Pumphrey sisters who lived directly across the driveway that separated our two rows of apartments. There were in all, perhaps a dozen kids in the neighborhood around my age, and while I knew all of them, my circle of playmates were mostly neighbors Buddy, Jimmy and Tommy.

My dad worked the day shift at Timken, from 6 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. – so he was usually at the apartment when I got home from school. Dad was the youngest of seven children, very passive, and liked by nearly everyone. Mom, who worked at Curtiss-Wright during the war, arrived home well past 5 p.m., so our 5:30 p.m. dinner was often rushed and the source of ongoing stress. Dinner was never fancy, and rarely consisted of anything much beyond meat and potatoes in those days. The stress of preparation, usually accompanied by my mother complaining about what or how my dad had started dinner, almost always turned into workplace discussions at the dinner table. Although I was treated well, and felt every bit a part of the family, for my parents, our lives revolved around their everyday experiences at work. Each would tell stories of what had happened to them – mostly dealing with co-workers who had done them wrong. What I learned at the dinner table was that my parents were always right – for their actions, behavior and decisions were never wrong in the stories they shared over dinner. The concept of omnipotent self that I developed at our dinner table was the exact opposite of what University School sought to engender in its students. My belief in myself was not welcome at school and my self confidence and abilities to see clear courses of action caused me repeated difficulties well into high school.

My interests or intellectual accomplishments were not discussed at the dinner table, unless I had done something noteworthy enough to be reprimanded. I was not happy in this environment, for I indeed wanted adult engagement, but my parents had



William Butche, Sr. [1860-1944]  
Paternal Grandfather  
at Sandusky St. home, Delaware, Ohio  
Summer of 1941

little time in their lives for exploring the life of a six year old. If asked about school, I said I liked it. That was sufficient after my unhappy experience at Second Avenue School.

On the week ends I helped mom do the laundry in our electric washer – an early model where the clothes had to be wrung out in a two cylinder wringer before and after being soaked in two rinse tubs. In my younger years I didn't see this as being work, for it was very often the only time mom and I spent together. I was mostly exempt from other household work, although I was often asked, and enjoyed drying the dishes in our small kitchen. One night, after we had finished the dishes, mom told me that the "funny papers" I enjoyed so much in the *Columbus Citizen* had stories to them. When I learned to read, she explained, one night as we sat at the dinner table, I would find them far more interesting than when she read *Nancy, Dagwood and Blondie*, and other strips to me. A light came on for me that night, one that no doubt occurred at a far earlier age in most other children. Reading wasn't about the abstract mechanics of symbol recognition and linguistics, but rather a way of telling stories and communicating ideas. My interest in reading went from little or none to full-speed ahead that night.

Dad spent very little time with me. His life was filled with work, Cincinnati Reds Baseball, occasional visits from his friends, and serial visits with all of his brothers and sisters. My uncles,



Walter and Bill visited us often – and when they did the conversation focused almost entirely on family disputes, Masonic lodge issues, and workplace conversation. All five of my dad's siblings were interested in me to some degree, but it was always clear to me that I was not yet a full fledged member of the family. On Sundays, after I returned from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Methodist church, my parents would have the car packed and ready for our weekly visit to my paternal grandmother's home in Delaware. The small house would always be packed with people for Sunday dinner.



Rose Goodman Butche [1865-1948]  
Paternal Grandmother

These Sunday dinners at my father's parents' home were attended by all of my father's family: Brothers, Bill and Walter, and Sisters, Beulah, Marie and Rosie. There were only two grandchildren, my three year older cousin Dick Clark, and myself. The big Sunday dinners included fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, at least three vegetables, a giant bowl of coleslaw, two kinds of rolls, jellies, trays of celery, pickles and scallions, and two or three kinds of pie for dessert. All of Rose Butche's daughters were involved in the preparation, but not the wives or girl friends of her sons which left them feeling unworthy, or left out.

In the heat of summer nearly everyone was miserable and behaved accordingly. But for me these feasts were marvelous events – not just for the foods, most of which were largely unavailable at home, but, for an only child, the entertainment provided by my dad's large family. I loved these weekly outings – especially when the adults would fight and argue after dinner. What I saw was the passion and friction of a large family.

Sometimes, my only cousin on that side of the family, aunt Marie's son, Dick Clark, and I would go outside and explore – very often in and around the underground tunnels at the nearby grain elevator, or on the campus of Ohio Wesleyan University. Like my other cousin, Jay, Dick was about three years older so our interests rarely coincided – but we both enjoyed exploring places we didn't belong.

After a stressful day with my dad's openly argumentative family, my mother was often tired and weary from the relentless and repetitive discussion of seemingly unimportant things. When we would get in the car for the trip back to our small apartment, mother would complain about dad's family, her not being accepted by dad's mother, and her need to be able to visit with her own mother or siblings on Sundays. On the way home, my dad, who was passive, and seldom said much, would become stoic and totally silent. He was the youngest in his family and had married late, at age thirty-five. What Mom wanted him to do was not possible in his situation, for he could not deal with his own mother, let alone all of his siblings. From his perspective, his wife had become a Butche. The idea that he had become, or ought to have become a part of her family, had probably never occurred to him.

Being passive-aggressive served to make dad's life increasingly intolerable as mom relentlessly pressed her case. Often as not, after we were home, the arguments continued. Dad was helpless. He couldn't make the decision, nor was he willing to tell his mother or his wife something they would not want to hear. Arguments among my parents always upset me – for I could not get away from them and always had to endure the stress.

To their credit, my parents' arguments were always verbal, and due to my dad's passivity, nearly always one-sided. By age six, I was already aware that Mom ran our family, yet I remained very confused about why things still didn't go as she wished. I did not understand that mom's strategy of trying to change things was by way of argument and nagging. It didn't work, for dad simply could not make a decision. Finally Mom did. At one Sunday dinner in

Delaware, she told grandmother Rose that we wouldn't be coming to Sunday dinners any longer. The resulting explosion among my dad's family damaged relationships for years. Needless to say we didn't stay for dinner that day. Dad, predictably, was at first miserable, and later very relieved at the family freedom Mom created for him. She was the offender, not dad, so his relations with his family remained unchanged while he was free of their demands. He had won, and mom had clearly become the outsider in dad's family. Before long, everyone accepted the new arrangement, and, in the years that followed, we shared Sunday and holiday events with both sides of the family.

Our family had changed, and everyone, including me and dad, understood that mom was in charge. While I very much enjoyed engaging with both of my parent's families after that fateful Sunday, my view of my father changed in ways that made our relationship far more distant. Although my predilection toward being master of my own ship was already evident, I was by then knowingly determined that no one would ever do to me what mom had done to dad.

What I didn't understand was that our family could not have survived if Mom hadn't taken charge. Dad couldn't make a decision for fear of offending someone, or creating a confrontation. Mom, the terrified young woman who had crossed picket lines to keep us together, did what needed to be done. Her actions held our family together and let dad return to his favorite role of being easy-going, lovable, and largely irrelevant in my life.

### **Wartime Columbus**

World War II was a difficult time for all American families. The demands for economic growth at home and the need for war materials in two theaters of war produced both benefits and problems. The benefits were jobs – especially for women. The problems were a seriously destabilized civil society brought about in part by the growing absence of young men, and psychological environment that often bordered on despair.

Even as a first grader I remember the movie newsreels about the war that featured pictures of burning cities, falling bombs, crashing airplanes, and explosions. When the first night-time blackouts were ordered in Columbus I remember being fearful that the war would soon burn our apartment to the ground. Or even that we might be attacked at University School. Fortunately, my parents, and even Miss Sutton, were far less concerned with these risks which helped me considerably.

Still, there was rationing, which made my family change their buying habits from a nearby mom and pop grocery ( Ralph Kiner's Grocery at Dennison and Second Avenues ), to the new Big Bear supermarket that had opened in an old skating rink on Lane Avenue, near Ohio Stadium. We had to have ration cards, and special coupons for meat, gasoline, tires – and my parents' weekly ration of Chesterfield cigarettes.

I loved University School. It was my only retreat from reality, my only opportunity to engage with ideas, and the only place where adults seemed to have any substantive interest in my inclinations or development. It would be several years before these patterns were broken, and my family made aware that my life held promise far beyond anyone's expectation.

### **At Seven, a Lifetime Seems Forever**

Life sometimes comes at us slowly, while moments of insight often as not come without warning – with sudden, sometimes long lasting consequences. My first life changing experience, something I would later discover having been an inflection point in my life, came only a few weeks after being withdrawn from Miss Lewis' first grade in the fall of 1943. Shortages from the war, and the inability to put out seasonal lights and displays made for a very subdued holiday season that year.

Although mom and I were included in several of my dad's lodge related holiday festivities that December, we were left alone on New Years eve while dad and his brothers were out reveling with their friends. I knew about the holidays, but as mom and I

gathered around the radio that night, I listened as each program featured a New Year's theme. Finally, as the New Year approached, WLW joined the NBC broadcast from Times Square in New York. As the countdown to midnight continued, Ben Grauer interviewed the revelers at Times Square between musical interludes by the Guy Lombardo orchestra. All the time I was playing with my Lincoln Logs on the living room floor. Finally, just before midnight, Ben Grauer spoke briefly about what had happened in 1943 and how much everyone was looking forward to a far better 1944.

I had some very fuzzy concepts of time at that age and 1943 was the first year I had come to know personally. Then, Ben Grauer announced that in a minute or less 1943 would be no more. I looked up at mom and asked where exactly 1943 was going. "It's old," she explained to me, "... and pretty soon it will fade away when the baby new year arrives."

"Turn off the radio," I asked mother, "I don't want a new year. I like 1943, don't let them take it away from me."

Before she could answer, Guy Lombardo began to play Auld Lang Syne, and mom explained that it was too late, it was already 1944.

I was seven years old and broken hearted that 1943 had been taken away from me. Mom reassured me that 1944 was a good thing, and that we were all going to live in the future.

"How far does the future go? I asked her, still broken hearted that something I had only come to recognize had been taken away.

"As far as you can count," she assured me, not at all aware at how deeply I felt injured that night.

"Will it go to 1965?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, mother assured me – even beyond 1965 – even to the end of the century in 1999."

For a seven year old, a year is pretty much forever, so the end of the century seemed a very long time away.

"What comes after that?" I asked mom.

“Two Thousand,” she explained.

“I want to live until two thousand,” I assured her.

I would never forget that night. Little did I know how fast 1944 would become 2004 and that I would still remember that cold New Year’s Eve in wartime Columbus.

## First Grade Reports

### Winter Quarter

*Margaret Sutton,  
March 20, 1944*

Robert is making fairly satisfactory progress in his school work and activities. As you know we think he still needs to improve in becoming more dependable and in taking his responsibilities. He works well under the guidance of a teacher but cannot always be depended upon at other times.

We will not send another detailed report until the end of the spring quarter. If you should like more information concerning Robert's activities during the winter quarter, please arrange for a conference.

Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Sutton  
First Grade Teacher

## Spring Quarter

*Margaret Sutton,  
June 15, 1944*

We feel that Robert has had a profitable year in the first grade group. He has begun to overcome many of the tendencies which we wrote you about at the end of the fall quarter. He is well liked by the other children and is a good leader although he sometimes is a little too 'bossy.' He likes to be the center of attention especially with adults. He is sometimes prone to argue before cooperating.

Robert has been one of the most creative members of the group. His vivid imagination and his original ideas have been noticed by all teachers who have worked with him. He has made excellent contributions in creative art, when we were writing original poems and stories, and during the music periods when the creative songs were composed. Robert has been so outstanding in this respect that we feel he should be encouraged to continue activities such as these.

Robert has made progress in reading and although he reads somewhat slowly, he comprehends the material read. He writes fairly well when he wants to, but he does not try to make his papers as neat as we know he can.

Robert has been a fairly good rester. We have noticed that on some days he seems too tired to do his best work and we wondered if he were getting a sufficient amount of rest.

Miss Silver has been pleased with the amount of progress Robert had made in the music activities. His creative songs and



dances were outstanding. He liked to dance alone and 'make up' his own steps.

Miss Snider reports that Robert had made excellent progress in the play activities. He has shown improvement in the way he handles the playground apparatus and he has good muscular coordination. She says Robert tends to be a leader but in sometimes too anxious to have his ideas carried out without being willing to accept the ideas of others.

Robert has been an interesting member of our group. He is usually cooperative and it has been a pleasure to work with him.

We recommend Robert for second grade work in the fall.

Very sincerely yours,  
Margaret Sutton



## Grade Two



Discovery by Sharing  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1944-1945*

**I**n the summer of 1944 I was lost. Absent the support and perpetual challenge offered me by University School, my life closed in to what it had been before – un-challenging and un-fulfilling. Not even my neighborhood friends, with whom I played almost full time every day, could fill the void I felt that summer. My parents, perhaps out of ideas and patience, felt they needed a break. Just before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, my dad borrowed some gasoline rationing stamps from his brothers, and we made the 120 mile drive to where I had once lived with my aunt and uncle in Canton, Ohio, where I would spend the summer.

### **In Search of My Own Identity**

In Canton, I was free of most of the problems that plagued me in Columbus. Discipline and behavior were never a problem for

me and I loved being reunited with my cousin Jay and all of the people I knew in the neighborhood. Although after age five I no longer lived in Canton, the environment was a far happier one than what I experienced at home. In part this was due to the stability and social structure in the Hohenshil neighborhood, and in part it was due to the family situation. My aunt did not work outside the home, which meant Jay and I were well supervised. That didn't keep us from being kids, for we did most of the dopey things pre-adolescent males did back then including racing down Serpentine Hill on our bicycles, smoking corn-silk rolled in toilet paper, and playing practical jokes on unsuspecting adults venturing down Clarendon Avenue after dark.

### **Candy on the Dresser**

The six weeks I spent in Canton in the summer of 1944 were very good for me, and no doubt gave my parents some much needed time alone in what were very hard times in their lives. Unlike our apartment in Columbus, where the only visitors were family, at the Hohenshil's there were a wide range of friends and acquaintances. One of Jay's and my favorite visitors were Prudence and Charles Gonser who visited often – especially for Friday night card games. Charlie Gonser was a mortician, and more than a little fond of spirituous liquors.

Prudy was a wonderfully outgoing woman full of fun, merriment, and who had a spirited, contagious laugh. Whenever the Gonsers came to play cards with my aunt and uncle, usually long after Jay and I had gone to bed, Charlie would sneak up the squeaky stairs to give us a small gift – usually gum, lifesavers, or candy. We loved Charlie Gonser and looked forward to his arrival. No matter how late the Gonsers came, Jay and I tried not to be asleep when Charlie would quietly sneak up the stairs to leave our treats. Even so, often as not we would be sound asleep, but Charlie always left candy and gum for us on our dresser. What's remarkable about this is that Charlie Gonser never once forgot to bring Jay and me treats in the dozen or more years I visited Canton. For

Jay and me, the Gonsers were part of our extended family.

Jay and I came to know the neighbors that summer. George Pollen, who was well into his seventies, loved kids, and was a master story-teller. What I learned from George was how to tell a story – a skill that served me well throughout my life. I loved George Pollen and the many long quiet afternoons Jay and I spent on his front porch. In the years that followed, even as University School was teaching me how to express myself in writing, George Pollen's stories continued to inspire me and set loose my imagination.

No matter how much Jay and I enjoyed the neighbors, most of our time was spent at play. Sometimes by ourselves, playing Monopoly in our upstairs bedroom with Jay's friends, but mostly with other kids in a wide range of outdoor activities.

### **Building Dams and Dreams**

In the summer of 1944, we discovered the old Timken family farm at the end of Clarendon Avenue north of Twelfth. Truth be told, the Timken farm was only six blocks away, but it seemed a long trip for an eight year old. Once across Twelfth, we climbed the fence and ran through the grazing cattle and down to the creek. It was there Jay and I, and others, dammed up the small stream, caught our first frogs, marveled at the tadpoles swimming about in the waters, and delighted in playing in the cool waters during the heat of summer. The days were long and joyful, but there soon arose a problem. I wanted to expand the small dam, install pipes in it that would carry the waters through the dam rather than over the top. Reluctantly, my cousin, our neighbor Glenn Volzer, and some of the other kids we played with, decided to help me to dam the creek.

The other kids, including Dick Weigand and Don Adams were fully three years older than me, but I seized the leadership opportunity and, in my own mind at least, directed the project. It took over a week for us to finish the project. Fortunately, Blum's plumbing supply company was just a block away on 7<sup>th</sup> Street. We

scoured the junk pile for the required pipes, valves and other stuff needed to build my fanciful dam.

Each day Blum's plumbers returned from jobs with old materials they threw onto a junk pile. We harvested what we needed from their junk pile and carried the pipes and valves nearly a half mile to the dam site. Within a couple of weeks the dam had been rebuilt and I had water flowing through tubes, pipes and valves sufficient to handle the dry summer flow of waters. Although our dam was built on the foundation stones of an earlier dam, the thought that a dam might not be permanent never occurred to me. Our thoughts were elsewhere, for once the dam was finished and the pipes closed, the water level behind the dam rose sufficiently to make a pool of crystal clear waters for swimming. In a flash we were into the waters and comfortable in the increasing heat of summer.

On one hot day in August, Jay and I arrived at the Timken farm one morning only to hear a playmate screaming that our dam was broken. Rain from heavy thunderstorms overnight were, by then, overflowing our dam. Much to my chagrin, the rain also softened up all of the cow chips in the field where the Timken cows grazed. In my rush to see what had happened, I ran through the cow dung in my bare feet with splatters flying everywhere – including on me. Everyone laughed at me and said my idea to plumb the dam had been stupid and that I deserved to be covered in cow-shit.

Even so, my first 'take charge' leadership experience had served me well. It gave me an out-of-school outlet for my intense interest in things scientific, and it taught me that the fruits of leadership are not always what one expects. No matter, for by the time I returned to Columbus for the second grade, I was beginning to discover how I was different from other children. Although I hadn't the slightest inkling of my academic interests, or potential, I had discovered the rewards of manipulating other people to achieve my own goals, and serve my own interests.

### **The Entertainer**

Being with children mostly older than I suited me well, but my activities didn't always please them. For one thing, I was a show off, and prone to seek and capture the attention of adults. One day, after we had been playing on the outside fire escape at the Clarendon Avenue Elementary School just a couple of blocks from where we lived, Jay and I headed home. As we walked along Milton Court, a small, unpaved alley connecting our house to the playground, we were no doubt looking for something else to entertain us. Soon we were heading for the back door to Kahler's Meat Market. Harold Kahler was a big man, friendly, and tolerant of kids. Once inside, I started to engage the adults by talking loudly and skipping around the long rows of meat coolers. Jay and the others would have none of my shtick and were soon outside on Clarendon Avenue. But I stayed inside, and when one of the adults asked if skipping around was all I could do, I assured him of my many seven year old talents. One of them, I bragged, was singing.

Truth be told, I had only just discovered singing. I not only had the crystal clear voice of a child soprano, but I also knew several tunes. When one of the men asked me to sing, I sprang forth in my very best version of Yankee Doodle. While it did not surprise me that the audience liked my performance, I was surprised, and later encouraged, by one of them giving me a penny every time I sang. When I left that afternoon, I knew what it was to be rich – for I had made, and had in my possession, six cents.

Jay was not happy at my money-making. Once home, he began to cry and complain to his mother how I always stole the show. Worst of all, he assured her, I had made six cents and he had made none. That was not fair, he argued. He deserved half of it, he earnestly told my aunt, just for putting up with me. He was right, but my aunt still let me keep my first six cents. From that day on, adults were fair game for me.

At the end of the summer, when I arrived back in Columbus, I was surprised with my first bicycle. Although it was used, it was assembled and tuned up by my uncle Carl. The used frame,

and the mostly used parts attached to it were a gift from my maternal grandmother, Madie Holmes Donley Hansgen. I was thrilled to finally have my own bicycle, and fully aware that the bicycle opened up the world for me.

### **Getting With the Program**

No matter that building the dam and singing for money had changed my life that summer, the second grade would prove something of a challenge for a precocious 'know it all'. While the first grade had been a year of play and discovery, the second grade was neither. While Miss Adams was a beautiful young woman with a pleasant demeanor and a sweet disposition, she was not taken in by my charm or my efforts to manipulate the second grade for my own pleasure. University School was not Kahler's meat market and my self-centered view of the world ran counter to the school's group centered philosophy. I was in for a disappointment when school began in later September.

Lillian Adams was running the second grade, not me, and she encouraged me to get with the program. No matter my interest in reading comics, both newspapers and monthly comic magazines, when I was forced to read school materials for content, I was average at best. I wasn't interested in *see Jane Run* materials. I didn't understand that reading would give me access to what did interest me. In the first grade I had done as little reading as possible.

Clearly I was head strong, determined, and heading for a showdown. Fortunately for me, Lillian Adams found me an interesting challenge. So, while she set ridged rules for me, and pushed me constantly, she also introduced me to music, art and storytelling. I loved music, and enjoyed art, and excelled at storytelling. My interest in reading comics, and the newspapers in which they appeared, helped me to discover reading for content. I didn't know it yet, but I was hooked on learning.

Even so, I wanted to be in charge of everything, to have my way, and was prone to making a commotion if my needs and wants



were not satisfied. While I have no recollection of Lillian Adams going out of her way to find sufficient challenge to keep me occupied at all times, even as a second grader, I knew I was stretching the rules, expanding the envelope of my opportunities, and that Miss Adams was my partner in discovery, and clearly in control.

### **Christmas On the Farm**

We visited Canton again at Christmas that year – a holiday event that would continue for many more years. My desire to be in Canton at Christmas gave mom the leverage she needed to break up the holidays at Delaware routine she so loathed. Although I loved the dinners and family driven commotion at Delaware, not even the arguments and fights could compete with a big Christmas



L-R: Jim Hohenshil, Bob Hohenshil, Robert Butche,  
and Jay Hohenshil. Christmas 1940  
Noel Hohenshil Farm, Smithville, Ohio.

with Jay and his family in Canton.

To my surprise, the extent of gifts that year was far greater than what I was used to. Perhaps it was because there were more adults, including several friends of the Hohenshil's who plied Jay and me with gifts. Or Bix Bixler and his wife, merchants from nearby Massillon, who brought us Buttered Pecan ice cream that cold Christmas eve.

On Christmas day we drove to the farm of Noel and Louise Hohenshil, north of Wooster, Ohio for Christmas dinner and even more gifts. Noel and Louise had three boys, Jim, Tom and Bob – Jay's cousins, but in so many ways mine as well. Only that summer, on my first trip to the Hohenshils farm, I got my first glimpse of the huge fields and had my first opportunity to touch, and smell farm animals. Jay's cousins, were all about our age – two closer to Jay's age and one a little younger than me. We played outside in the cold that Christmas day, enjoyed a sumptuous farm raised Christmas dinner, and opened many more gifts from under the tree. Similar events over the years helped to assure my position with Jay's extended family. Jimmy, Tom and Bob Hohenshils have been part of my life, and Jay's, ever since – for which we are both enriched and thankful.

When I returned to school in January, I knew I was changing. Part of that change was the normal result of growing, but increasingly, it was the result of my widening interest in nearly everything around me – deftly encouraged by Miss Adams. Although she kept me on a very short leash for the remainder of that year – University School had become the center, if not the embodiment, of my sometimes vexing and confusing childhood. And best of all, my singing career seemed assured, as even Miss Adams, and music teacher Miss Tolbert would take note of my singing voice.

## Second Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Lillian E. Adams,  
December 31, 1944*

We feel that Robert is making a satisfactory adjustment to our second grade. He is doing nice work in reading, and is very much interested in the other activities in which our group participates.

Miss Orr [ related arts ] states that Robert is doing very good work in the shop. He has many original ideas, and he plans his work very carefully. He always carries it through to completion. He has not limited his selection, but has worked with many of the materials which are provided.

Mr. Peck [ physical education ] feels that Robert usually plays well with the other children during physical education period, but there are times when he does not display good sportsmanship. He likes to tease, but is very often easily offended when other tease him in return.

Robert enjoys music class, and Miss Tolbert feels that he makes very excellent contributions to the group. He has a good sense of rhythm, and enters into the rhythmic activities with much enthusiasm.

Robert eats well at noon, but does not relax as much as he should during rest. We have noticed a tendency on Robert's part to argue a great deal about something he does not want to do. He is very often willing to make excuses for himself rather than to

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assume responsibility for his actions. We are trying to help him develop more self direction.

We enjoy having Robert in our room, and we take this opportunity to wish you and Robert a very happy new year.

Sincerely yours,  
Lillian E. Adams  
Second Grade Teacher

## Health Report

*April 24, 1945*

You will recall that at our recent conference with you we came to the agreement that Robert should have a health check here at school. Dr. Stanton has examined Robert, and she recommends that you take him to a family doctor for a Basal Metabolism Rate. She feels it is very important that this be done.

The note that on Robert's health record on February 2, 1945 Dr. Stanton recommended wedges for his shoes to correct troubles he was having with his ankles. Can this be taken care of soon?

We would appreciate a report from your family doctor on the basal Metabolism Rate so we may have it for your records here at school.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Miss Adams

Mrs. Hendon, R.N.

## Spring Quarter

*Lillian E. Adams,  
June 11, 1945*

Some of Robert's problems which we have discussed with are you still in evidence. In work period there are still too many occasions when Robert does not carry his plans through to completion unless he is urged to do so. There has been a tendency on his part to destroy articles which he has started and does not want to finish, because he feels that if the article is destroyed he can start on something else. There are also numerous times when he will not assume the responsibility for making any plans at all for work period. Other times he plans and works very well. He needs to develop good consistent work habits as he is very capable of doing good work.

Robert is alert to number experiences, and is able to figure out many problems with which he is confronted. His reading has shown improvement this quarter because he has applied himself in a much better way by paying attention, and studying silently as well as orally. Previously Robert did not care to study unless the teacher was giving him special attention.

Robert enjoys music, and he has a good singing voice. He participates in the rhythm band, and has a good understanding of tempo and tone quality. In creative rhythms Robert still limits the progress which he is capable of making by acting silly in an effort to attract attention.

Robert continues to be cooperative in physical education class, and to display good sportsmanship. The children like to play with him, and he is anxious and willing for others to have their turns in games and on the play equipment.

Robert's main problem continues to be one of assuming a desirable type of self discipline, and of working up to the ability of which he is capable.

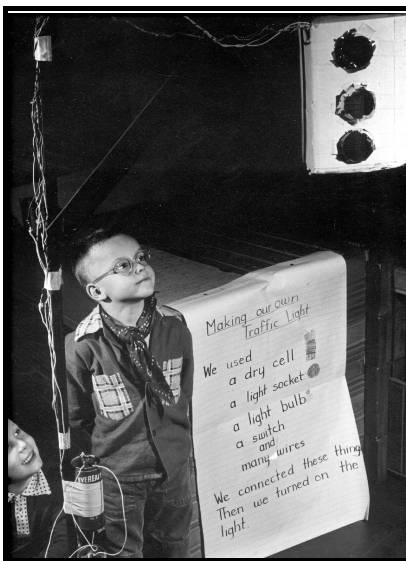
We have enjoyed having Robert a member of our group, and we recommend him for third grade work in the fall.

Sincerely yours,  
Lillian E. Adams  
Second Grade Teacher





## Grade Three



Traffic Light  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1945-1946*

**M**y summer vacation in 1945 was not at all like the previous year when I oversaw the building of the dam on the Timken family estate. For one thing, my cousin and his friends were by then in junior high-school and far less willing to let me run anything. Nor would Jay let me sing either, unless I paid him half my earnings which I did a few times.

### **Bossy Bob**

No matter, bossy Bob arrived in late June full of energy and enthusiasm. Although it would be many more years before I recognized that my aunt Alma was really my second mother, I knew I loved everything about living with the Hohenshil's at the corner of Sixth Street and Clarendon avenue. My cousin Jay treated me like a younger brother – which I didn't like much most

of the time. At that age he was twice my size and not shy about keeping me from interfering with his fun. His dad, my uncle Carl, was an executive at Ohio Power which left my aunt in charge of my cousin Jay and me. She ran us, the house, and some parts of the neighborhood from her kitchen in what was a really small house.

From her kitchen window, Alma could see everything going on outside on Sixth street. One day, some road equipment showed up to grade the road and oil the gravel. Of course, we all helped the workmen until we got bored and left for other pursuits. Alma took them water in the heat of the afternoon and chatted with



Robert Butche & Jay Hohenshil  
with Ginger, Smithville Farm, 1945

them. When we came home in late afternoon from playing in the Canton City parks, Alma was already working on the family dinner. She had news, she told us later. The workmen had said this was the last year that 6<sup>th</sup> Street would be oiled. Next summer, it was to be paved very much like the wide tree lined expanse of Clarendon Avenue, where 6<sup>th</sup> Street dead ended.

Across Sixth Street, perhaps fifty feet from Alma's kitchen, was the Acme Supermarket – one of

three storerooms on that corner. Nothing went on at the Acme that Alma didn't know about. I remember having breakfast in that small kitchen during those years – as if it were yesterday. Alma fixed Jay and I toast, all we could eat, bathed in fresh butter and dunked in hot coffee. Outside, I could see the promotion banners in the Acme market windows across the street, "Kellogg's Pep, 9 cents", and "Wieners, 19 cents a pound."

Everything we needed was close at hand. The Tops bakery was across the street. Bachelor's pharmacy and the neighborhood Isaly's ice cream shop were two blocks away. Kahler's meat market, where I had sung that day and where Jay would work during his high school years, was next to the Acme market across the street. Even John's barbershop was nearby in a small storeroom behind Bachelor's.

No wonder, that in my youth, Canton, Ohio was the center of my universe. My aunt and uncle never argued – that's not to say there weren't plenty of tough times and angry words. My cousin Jay and I were raised like brothers in those years, so I got to play with all the older kids. I suspect my remembrances of those years are far sweeter for me than Jay, due largely to my summers in Canton being a much needed respite from the reality of our family life in Columbus.

### **Water Boy**

In the summer of 1945, Jay and his friends formed a team in a new softball league that played in some of the Canton city parks. At my aunt Alma's insistence, I was permitted to tag along and participate. Nobody wanted a third grader hanging around, and the league rules required that everyone who played had to be at least twelve. So, to my considerable disappointment, I was made the "water boy" and found myself responsible for lugging the bag of bats, balls and gloves to the games. I tried to promote my way into being umpire, for there was always a shortage of people to call balls and strikes, but nobody on either team wanted that. At least, I got to tag along, but softball was played only two mornings a week that summer. To fill the remainder of our time, Alma and Carl arranged for us to have season swimming pool passes at a small amusement park well north of town. I remember my dad giving Alma the eight dollars to purchase a swimming membership for me that summer. The bad news for a little kid like me that summer, was their choice of Lake O'Springs, a small, family operated establishment nearly eight miles from where we lived.



Lake O'Springs Park - ca. 1931

### **Eight Miles, Uphill Both Ways**

Knowing swimming was part of the plan that summer, my parents included my bicycle when we left for Canton in June. The first trip to Lake O'Springs was by car so Alma could acquaint us with the bath house routine. From then on, we had to make the trip on our bicycles. Needless to say, the daily ride to and from Lake O'Springs was a monumental task for an eight year old. The route we traveled was partly on busy city streets, and a well traveled two lane highway. The route was hilly in some places, and difficult for a child my age to navigate. Although I remember the trip being eight miles, uphill both ways, I never missed going. No matter my growing penchant to be bossy and propensity to lead others to where I wanted to go, the trips to Lake O'Springs kept me in my place

From the time we left home on our bicycles on all those beautiful summer mornings, I was always last. I had the heaviest bicycle, I was the smallest kid, and among Jay's many friends the least athletic. Beginning on the very first day I was the laughing

stock of the group. “Is Bob lost again?”, and “Hey porky, better get a move on” were screamed at me constantly by the older kids both going and coming home. I hated it, but that summer I learned that sometimes you have to pay a price for what you want. I paid the price, and loved our all day outings that often got us home barely before dinner. The summer of 1945 was perhaps the most magical in my life. Still, life’s lessons come at us no matter our age. Being teased mercilessly by the other kids would be the least of life’s lessons I was to face that summer.

Later that summer, before I was to return to Columbus in late August, my parents drove to Canton for a family vacation. The outing was to be held at a place called “Andy’s Landing” at Guilford Lake, about forty miles east of Canton. Charlie and Prudy Gonser came along, as did aunt Alma’s friend Helen Bernard and her daughter Nancy. Jay and I were the only kids in the group, although Bill Drum and Nancy Bernard, whose romantic interests seemed to have all of the adults in something of a tizzy, were in high school.

It was hot at the lake, but everyone had a great time – especially Jay and I who spent as much time as possible on the lake. At night we all had dinner together after which the adults played cards until well past our bedtime.

### **Bulletin From NBC News**

One morning while Jay and I were preparing to take out one of Andy’s row boats, my Aunt Alma came running out of the small cabin our families shared. Jay and I were outside, preparing to launch one of the small row boats when we heard her shouting gleefully, “The war is over! The war is over!” We ran back up to the cabin, as did nearly everyone outside that morning, to listen to the news on the radio. It was the morning of August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1945, two days before my ninth birthday. The Japanese had agreed to an unconditional surrender to General Douglas MacArthur’s forces in the Pacific.



Robert & Brownie, at Grandma Hansgen's house during World War Two. Dad's trusty 1937 Ford remained our family car until 1951.

In late September, I returned to school in Katherine Mustaine's third grade class. We assembled in the crowded confines of room 106 which overlooked Woodruff avenue. Many things had changed for me since the end of second grade. For one thing, the distance limits on my bicycle excursions faded quickly as a result of what I had been doing that summer.

Perhaps of greater importance, the events of that summer gave me a great deal to talk about, and more importantly, to write about. While I wasn't yet mature enough to take on death in any of my stories, my new consciousness of the world beyond University School, and my many adventures of the summer provided me with plenty of material not just for reporting, but as ideas for fiction writing as well. Both reading and writing began to take hold of me as very interesting activities. The end of the war, with all of the celebrations and activities that followed, gave me an enduring interest in world affairs that would be developed in Mrs. Mustaine's third grade and my new best friend, "My Weekly Reader".

### **Discovering I Was Different**

At some point in our development all of us find out we're in some ways different from others. For me, it was when I began to understand that my goals, my level of determination, and my abilities to persuade others set me apart. I may have been last on



Robert with his first bicycle, Canton, Ohio, 1944

every bicycle trip that summer, but my penchant for leadership and reaching out for the levers of power were only beginning to take me where I was destined to go. Mrs. Mustaine, a wonderfully warm woman who could be charming and strict at the same time, was soon to become one of my favorite teachers – for while she was fully aware of my penchant for wanting to run things, she knew how to steer my energies into areas that would consume them, not her. It was in Mrs. Mustaine's third grade that I first became aware that I was different from the others in my class. And best of all, the third grade proved to be everything I had hoped it would be. No matter the bossy, sometimes uncooperative child that would have to mature to be successful, this would be the year young Robert would discover the joy of learning.





## Third Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Kathleen Mustaine,  
December 31, 1945*

We have been very pleased with Bob's progress in the academic phases of his school activities this quarter. Bob reads well and he is developing good techniques of research reading. He enjoys his Weekly Reader and is quite independent in completing the reading checks at the end of each week's paper. Bob is developing a better understanding in number situations and is growing in speed and accuracy in addition and subtraction computation.

Bob shows originality in his written expression. He tells very interesting stories and is well able to hold the attention of the group.

Bob is very dependent upon others in the Work Period for ideas and help. Bob has made a large table for our room to hold science materials and an electric train. He has been a long time completing this – not because it has been a large undertaking but because he has been unwilling to think through his problems for himself. Bob is always willing to boss a job, and because he is a strong leader he has many who are willing to cooperate in such a situation. We believe Bob needs to learn to work with children more cooperatively.

Bob's leadership in Physical Education period as well is not always constructive. We are encouraging him to develop the positive qualities of democratic leadership.

Growing Up In University School

Bob gave an excellent portrayal of Santa Claus in our Christmas Play. Bob loves music and dramatization and is excellent in both.

We wish for Bob and his family a happy holiday season.

Sincerely Yours,  
Kathleen Mustaine  
Third Grade Teacher

## Winter Quarter

*Kathleen Mustaine,  
March 15, 1946*

We are very pleased with Bob's growth this quarter. We feel he has made outstanding progress and should be highly commended for his efforts. He has improved in all phases of his academic work. Bob is reading much more difficult material than last quarter. He has assumed the responsibility for studying and improving his spelling. He is becoming more independent in solving his number problems and more accurate in abstract computation.

We feel that Bob's personal and social growth this quarter has been the most significant. He is more independent in the Work Period and has developed much better work habits. He is increasingly dependable and cooperative. He directs his own activities better, and is developing more democratic methods in working and playing with others.

In Physical Education this quarter the third grade has spent one day playing more highly organized team games. Another day the children choose a type of self-directed activity such as bowling, tumbling, rope-jumping, etc. On Fridays they use the apparatus – ropes, buck, horizontal bars and rings. Bob is developing better muscular coordination and self assurance in this area and appears to thoroughly enjoy all of the activities. His attitudes are more cooperative, and he is less inclined to dominate children not as skilled as himself.

Square-Dancing, the schottische, rye waltz and singing games have been much enjoyed by Bob during our music period. Not only have these given him an opportunity to develop rhythmic

expression through a group activity but have enabled him to participate freely without self-consciousness. These dances have also required him to participate cooperatively with the group. Because Bob enjoyed these dances and was anxious to excel he has to work with the whole group and help it to improve in order to achieve recognition himself. Bob did an exceptionally good job of this. We have been using several different music books this quarter and Bob is well able to read the music and words of the new songs we learn.

Sincerely Yours,  
Kathleen Mustaine  
Third Grade Teacher

## Spring Quarter

*Kathleen Mustaine,  
June 15, 1946*

It is indeed a pleasure to write concerning Bob's growth this year. His fine progress in all phases of his school work is the result of a sincere effort on his part. Bob's attitude has changed a great deal. In the fall Bob often was domineering in the group situations and negative toward individual children and his own responsibilities. As the year progressed Bob made a consistent effort to be more cooperative and helpful. He has achieved much satisfaction from the groups's growing contributions. The group often looks to Bob now for democratic leadership because of his excellent ideas, dependability and considerate attitude toward others.

Bob has grown in his ability to plan well and see his plan through to completion with less dependence on adult supervision and checking.

Bob enjoys writing and telling stories. His papers are neat and well written and show increasing independence in accurate written self-expression.

We recommend Bob for fourth grade in the fall.

Sincerely Yours,  
Kathleen Mustaine  
Third Grade Teacher



## Grade Four



Discovering the Arts  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1946-1947*

**I**n the summer before I was to begin the fourth grade, I already understood that I lived in two completely different worlds. What I saw and observed in our neighborhood and what I experienced at University School were worlds apart. In many ways, University School immersed me into a world of immense opportunity, tolerance, and discovery.

### **Exploring My World**

By the time school was out in June of 1946, Bob and his bicycle were on the go all day every day. Groups of us kids were always into something, but rarely if ever, in any trouble. Although we played and traveled with different children from time to time, I preferred playing with Buddy Hitchcock, Jimmy Esselstine and Cy Graham. Cy lived only two houses away. He was a tall,

scrawny kid often dressed only in overalls absent shirt, socks or shoes. His mother was a sometimes an ill-tempered woman, seemingly well over three-hundred pounds, who didn't come down stairs very often. Her companion, a burly, bearded man who went by the name of Vic, was loud and boisterous – very often drunk, and much to my embarrassment, fond of urinating into the kitchen sink. Cy was a good kid and well liked by his comrades in the streets, but none of us much liked going to his house.

On evenings, weekends and in the summers, we spent a great deal of time playing in the field behind our apartment complex. Sometimes we would visit with workers inside the adjoining “tin factory” through crank out windows facing the area where we played. At other times, we would take our bicycles to Goodale park where we played on the swings and sometimes fished in the shallow lake.

The summer of 1946 was the summer I first met the Shonk brothers, David and Richard, who lived at the corner of First Avenue and Summit street. They were Catholic, so I saw them sometimes at Sacred Heart Church which was directly across from their house. More importantly to me, they were aspiring newspaper carriers. David, as I recall, carried the *Columbus Citizen*, and Richard had the early morning route for *The Ohio State Journal*.

### **Up and Down the Main Stem**

With the end of the war, mom had been laid off at Curtiss-Wright, and we returned to a single income family. Mom was then home in the daytime, and she would take me downtown shopping from time to time. It was fun, for we always began at Lazarus and then worked our way up High Street visiting every “dime store” on the street. We'd also have lunch at one of the dime store luncheon counters which meant a big treat for me, a grilled hamburger and a fountain Coca-Cola. I called our trips *traveling up and down the main stem*, a phrase I heard often on Walter Furniss news broadcasts on WCOL.



Sometimes we'd even visit the Union store at Long and High. Such shopping trips, whether I went along or not, usually included a purchase of a small toy for me. My favorite was to get a tiny automobile made to look like familiar cars of the day. Such trophies cost only ten cents back then, but in those days, ten cents had the equivalent purchasing power of today's dollar.

### **The American Dream**

Something had fundamentally changed in America in the months following the war. The American economy was on the rebound, and for the first time anyone could remember, jobs were becoming plentiful and wages were increasing. Part of the expanding economy was pent up demand for goods, but there was also a longer range change in public attitudes that increasingly saw prosperity as part and parcel of the American Dream. Home ownership began to flourish, and with it, a yearning among middle class families to move out of the inner city and buy their own homes. I didn't know it yet, but the American Dream was in our family's future as well.

The year I would begin the fourth grade, The Ohio State University would begin the longest period of growth in its history. Under the auspices of the new "GI Bill" passed by Congress to enable men coming home from war to earn college degrees, Ohio State went from scarcity to overload in less than eighteen months. All over campus, Quonset Huts were constructed to accommodate the sharply increased number of students. Within two years the woods near University School would be populated with shabby, sometimes unheated classrooms. Our playground west of the school, disappeared so the university could extend College Road past the school to Woodruff Avenue. Our frequent trips across campus, sometimes as entire classes, and very often individually, revealed a burgeoning university environment and a very positive attitude about the future.

Even by the beginning of fourth grade, University School students were frequent users of the vast facilities of the College of

Education, including the swimming facilities at Pomerene Hall and the Natatorium where we swam nude in those days. By the fourth grade, many of us elected to purchase OSU Athletic cards, which cost about six dollars on our fee cards, and included tickets to all home football and basketball games. Although I had been to OSU football games with my parents during the later years of the war, having my own student tickets would have to wait until our family was better situated financially. Unbeknownst to me, that wait would only be a couple of years – and that it would be me who would pay for my own football tickets.

### **Learning Hard Lessons**

One Saturday morning, I walked up to Taggart's Texaco to buy a five-cent Coca-Cola from his brand spanking new vending machine. I knew Ralph Taggart very well. He was a friendly, easy going man who happily tolerated all of us kids. His filling station was so close to our apartment that I could see parts of it outside my second floor bedroom window. After buying and drinking the Coke, I started to head home. Passing by the pumps, I headed down First Avenue toward home. Suddenly there was a screech of tires behind me as a fast moving car swerved around the corner from Summit Street and careened toward the First Avenue ramp to the Texaco station. It happened so fast I couldn't get out of the way. Fortunately, the car had slowed sufficiently so that it did not throw me to certain death. Instead, as I started to run, it caught me from behind, threw me face down onto the concrete ramp, and ran over my right leg at the knee. I began to scream as I writhed in pain, and soon Ralph Taggart, was at my side.

Meanwhile, the driver nonchalantly drove on to the pump to fill up his tank with 22 cent per gallon regular gasoline. By the time I was composed sufficiently to try to get up, my dad was on the scene. Dad spoke to Ralph Taggart about what had happened. Then, although I was limping badly and with tears in my eyes, dad told me to go over to the man who had run over me to apologize for getting in his way. I was in too much pain and making what dad

may have thought an unnecessary fuss, so he took me by the hand and lead me back down First Avenue to our apartment.

Mom wondered if I shouldn't be examined by a doctor, but there was never any money available for medical emergencies in those days, so I was put to bed. By the next day I was back up and active again – although the damage to my right knee cartilage would give me problems the rest of my life. Worse, it would be years before I could walk down a street without being overcome by horrible fear that any oncoming car would run off the street and run over me. For several years, the sound of an oncoming car from behind was so fearful to me that I would have to turn around and watch it pass by.

In late June, we loaded my bicycle and some clothes in the old Ford and headed up US route 62 to my aunt's home in Canton. To my surprise, life was changing beyond our Columbus apartment and University School. New cars were seen on the streets, new homes were being built, rationing was gone, and there was new optimism.

Not everything changed, of course. Jay and his friends were playing softball again that year, and I was still the water boy. We even spent some time along the old creek on the Timken estate where we caught frogs and crawdads. But best of all, Jay and I, and some of the other kids, once again had summer passes to the swimming facilities at Lake O'Springs. But we were changing as well, and other activities became of interest, not only because the war had ended, but because we were growing up as well.

### **Death at an Early Age**

One sunny morning in early August, we set out for Lake O'Springs. Our route never varied in all of those years – up Clarendon Avenue, then west down 12<sup>th</sup> Street, north on Wertz, and diagonally northwest on Fulton Road, then north on Brunnerdale until we reached Spring Lake Drive. Everything went well that morning, and we arrived at Lake O'Springs around ten a.m. What we expected was a day of fun and frolic, but that was not to be.

Even before we turned onto Spring Lake Drive, toward the bath house alongside the lake, we could hear Dinah Shore loudly singing her newest hit, “Doin’ What Comes Naturally.” Someone had put a nickel in the jukebox behind the miniature golf course, but suddenly, ambulances roared up behind us, sirens screaming. The rush of people must have jarred the jukebox, because the record played over and over for nearly an hour.

The ambulances all but ran us off the road that morning. By the time we reached Spring Lake Drive, the word was out that someone may have drowned. Only minutes before our arrival, a young girl had been found at the bottom of the nine foot deep diving ‘tank’ Jay and I usually played in most of the day. While the girl was being pulled from the water and given respiratory treatment, the juke box continued playing “Doin’ What Comes Naturally” over and over again with maddening monotony.

Then, as the emergency workers tried to revive the little girl, the park became deathly silent – except for Dinah Shore. Finally, while we stood silently by our bicycles, the stretcher bearing the bluish and lifeless body of a girl about my age was loaded into the ambulance where we were standing. I was horrified.

The “tank”, as we called it, remained closed that day, and, absent any parental support, we each had to deal with the girl’s death as best we could. I would remain shaken for several weeks, for although I knew that old people died, the death of someone my age was very upsetting. Jay and I described the events to my aunt and uncle that evening, but no one, not even Jay and I, knew how much the events of that day had changed us. Although an excellent swimmer, that summer I came to fully understand that the pleasures of swimming came with risks as well.

Even as the remainder of the summer unfolded, flashbacks of that day followed me constantly. For weeks, I found it very difficult to dive into the tank without thinking of that girl and how she had died. I would remember that little girl’s death that summer for the remainder of my life.

### **Me and Eloise**

Columbus changed considerably in the year after the end of World War II. Gasoline was plentiful again, and dad bought new tires for the old Ford. People in nearby apartments began to talk of moving, maybe to someplace called the suburbs, or perhaps to distant Westerville. For me there was new freedom, including the option of riding my bike to school whenever I liked. The school had a new director, the father of my friend and classmate Johnny Ramseyer. My visits to the Ramseyer's modest home on Brevoort Road in nearby Clintonville took on a new dimension when Johnny's father became the school's new Director.

Dr. John Ramseyer was an affable, friendly man who was also a demanding disciplinarian at home. I liked and respected Johnny Ramseyer's father, but, being familiar with me from his home setting, meant that, like Johnny, I was sometimes pinched by the ear and overtly disciplined for minor infractions in front of classmates. But the school's new director was not to become a problem in my life. Instead, it would be my new teacher, Eloise Keebler, who came to University School that year to fill in for Katherine Mustaine in what was intended to have been a two year teacher cycle for our class. The two-year concept was intended to provide an atmosphere in which both teacher and students would be together over two grades.

For some members of my class, Mrs. Keebler would be remembered as one of their favorites, but this was not the case for me. Nor would it be for some others, who had become accustomed to University School's flexible scholastic development practices that permitted some students to move faster, or sometimes slower than others. For me, most everything I had come to know and love about University School, changed to some degree when I started the fourth grade.

No doubt Mrs. Keebler was an experienced and competent teacher, or John Ramseyer would never have hired her, but for me, I began to have the same sense of hopelessness in Mrs. Keebler's class that I had encountered at Second Avenue School. I worked

only when pressured, and dreamed of being elsewhere. I didn't like my teacher. I didn't like what we were studying, and I was unhappy.

### **Kip and Bobby's Grand Adventure**

Kip Patterson and I set out on an adventure on the day we were to have Schick tests. In a moment of youthful foolishness and exuberance, Kip and I decided to skip school that day. I was the leader of the expedition, and I deserved the price I paid for our outing, but Kip was the one who had family where we could go for the day and still not miss lunch.

Soon we were out of school, walking down Woodruff Avenue, past Ohio Stadium, over the Olentangy River, and toward Arlington until we came to the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad tracks. Our destination was Kip's grandparent's home several miles to the north. To get there, we walked the tracks like tramps, sometimes skipping from tie to tie and at other times walking on top of the shiny rails as if a tight rope. By the time we reached Kip's grandmother's place it was very hot – and we were thirsty and hungry. Unfortunately, she was not home. What to do? The obvious choice for fourth graders was to go back to the railroad and walk several miles further north to where Kip's family lived nearby to the tracks on West Henderson road.

By then, we were missed at school. Almost at once, people were looking frantically for two little guys out exploring the world. Both Kip and I were in deep trouble, and for me, what happened afterwards, made Mrs. Keebler's fourth grade class seem far more palatable. Still, I remained a serious behavior problem that year – something that would substantially disappear once I was removed from Eloise Keebler's classroom.

### **Emerging Adventurer**

Although the railroad outing with Kip Patterson was largely viewed as a behavioral issue by the school, it was also the first clear manifestation of my penchant for adventure. From this

time on, my penchant for traveling Frost's *road less traveled*, would take me places and engage me in activities far beyond the ordinary.

One of my first adventures came later this same year when one of my dad's Masonic organizations, the Achbar Grotto, sponsored an off-season circus as a way of fund raising. The cost of renting acts was substantial so the managers sought to use lodge volunteers wherever possible. Most of the men were needed for ticket sales, ushers, and other administrative tasks so none volunteered for several vacant clown positions. When my dad and his brothers were discussing this problem one night in our front room, I volunteered. My dad thought this a bad idea, but my uncle Walter pressed forward. Soon, I was named an official clown for the five day run of the circus. My *act* would be me and our small cocker-terrier named Zoonie.

The other clowns were very helpful with teaching me how to use the zinc-oxide makeup. My costume was made of clothes mom deemed ready for the trash. It took me a couple of nights to get the hang of clowning, but by the first weekend performance, Friday night, I was familiar with our activities and roles. I worked hard to earn the respect of the professional clowns and they recognized my efforts by naming me to break in a one-night clown for Friday night. Although I had heard the name from adults, I neither knew nor recognized the most famous newspaper figure of the time, Johnny Jones, of the *Columbus Dispatch*.

Jones was an affable and friendly man, full of fun and anxious to learn from his experiences and to later write about them. I taught him how to design and apply his clown makeup. The head clown, Emmett Kelley, one of the most famous in the American Circus world, told me to help Jones put on *black-face* makeup. In the clown world the black face clowns, like Emmett Kelley, are the sad faced. Black face makeup covers less of the body, is mouth oriented, and takes far less time to apply because there is no white foundation. I gave it my best, but in the end, one of the other clowns had to help get Johnny Jones looking like a clown.



*Columbus Dispatch* Columnist Johnny Jones and  
Robert Butche in clown makeup  
Achbar Grotto Circus, Fairgrounds Coliseum - 1947  
Photo: *Columbus Dispatch*

Johnny Jones was a great deal of fun that night. Shortly after we began the grand parade that opened the circus, the announcer identified Johnny Jones and his *friend*, Bobby Butche. The crowd roared, and my mom loved it – but even I knew it was Johnny Jones the crowd was recognizing, not me.

By the time the circus ended on Saturday night, I loved being part of the show. I had come to know the animal people, and I had discovered the other kids in the show who traveled with their parents. The clowns invited me to join their regular act the next year when they were in the Ohio region. For months, I dreamed of being in the big tent with the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus as it traveled all over the Midwest. Mom put the kabash on me being on the road all summer, but I did get to play the show when it was in Columbus, and one afternoon in Canton.



The next fall, Achbar Grotto sponsored a Rodeo in Columbus and I was invited to clown with them. While I loved the rodeo format, the work of a Rodeo Clown was far different from what I learned from the Ringling trained clowns. Circus clowns are for diversion, crowd interaction and comedy. Rodeo clowns play a far different role for they are charged with protecting the bull riders. Although clowns make their safety role appear comical to the audience, Rodeo clowning is very serious business.



Emmett Kelley

Photo: Clown Hall of Fame

Once a rider is thrown, he is in danger of being attacked by an angry bull. The job of the clowns is to confuse and divert the bull. The only safety for the clowns is outrunning, confusing or disappearing from view. When the first two don't work, the only way for the clown to avoid getting gored is to jump into a safety barrel just large enough for a man to get into. Sometimes the clown's disappearance confuses the bull, but very often the angry animal is not fooled and charges the barrel. The barrel is, therefore, the clown's last choice for avoiding the charging bull.

The first night I was charged the barrel was on the other side of the bull. Inexperienced as I was, I decided to race the bull to the safety fence. From the moment I began to run, I knew I was in trouble, but then I had yet to discover how much faster a person can run when being charged by an angry bull.

Both mom and dad were in the Coliseum that night. When I made it safely to the side fence and scrambled above the bull's level, the ring announcer exclaimed, "... Never saw a clown run so fast in my life. So, at the end of the first event, it's Fat Boy one and bull zero ... "

### **Keebler's Challenge**

Fortunately, the variety and scope of what University School had to offer, even in Mrs. Keebler's fourth grade, kept me in tow that year. To her considerable credit, Eloise Keebler worked hard to win me over. I've no doubt but that she was as mystified by me, as I was by her that year. She understood that I was doing work far below my potential, yet, in my memory, she was the only teacher I would ever know at University School who had difficulty engaging me and effectively eliciting my full cooperation and interest.

When I told my parents that year that I no longer wanted to go to University School I was immediately punished. Little did I know that notwithstanding my difficulty in Eloise Keebler's fourth grade, leaving University School would have been a monumental mistake. Fortunately, my parents never considered my childish request.

No matter my inability to engage fully with Mrs. Keebler, she kept me in line and academically engaged. Although my dislike of her ways faded as the year progressed, the fourth grade was when elementary school began to move beyond basics and into the realm of ideas. When our class chose a topic, *The Growth of Our State and Our Nation*, school began to interest me in ways it had not before.

So it is clear to me today that Eloise Keebler did her job that year far better than did I. For, she finally engaged me in learning about the large world around me – and encouraged me to begin applying my natural abilities and interests to school endeavors. Best of all, it set me up for what was to follow later, when Mary Jane Loomis was to be my guide out of childhood and into the murky waters of pre-adolescence.

## Fourth Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Eloise K eebler,  
January 7, 1947*

As Robert has probably told you the unit which the fourth grade chose for group study this year is The Growth of Our State and Our Nation.

It was decided that it would be well to begin by studying the first people recorded in Ohio, the Mound Builders. Further plans include the study of the American Indian and later the coming of the white man and his progress through the years.

As compared to previous years Robert's adjustment to school this quarter has, on the whole been very satisfactory. He gives very good help in thinking through group problems and has assumed group responsibilities upon several occasions. He seems to recognize his own behavior difficulties and is trying very hard to develop more self control while working or playing with others. However, he still has some problems in which he requires help and guidance.

Although a leader in the group Robert doesn't apply himself to his own individual work as much as he should. Arithmetic and spelling papers are done rather haphazardly and show little study and preparation. He wastes a good deal of time in school and needs to feel responsibility for improving his skills in spelling, writing and numbers. His skill in reading is average but he reads very little unless reminded to do so.

Robert's planning in related arts shows improvement and his ideas have been good. He has used a variety of materials and has completed each piece of work. In physical education he has not always seemed interested in group games and doesn't want to take part. However, he has been courteous and has not interfered with group participation. Effort has been made to interest him in those activities and it is hoped he will become more cooperative for he has the physical qualifications to become a leader in this phase of his work.

Sincerely yours,  
Eloise C. Keebler  
Fourth Grade Teacher

## Winter Quarter

*Eloise K eebler,  
March 15, 1947*

Robert continues on the whole to give good help in thinking through group problems and in accepting group responsibility. He possesses definite qualities of leadership and the ability to influence the opinions of others. There are times, however, when he assumes a negative attitude in his behavior and his leadership does not work for the good of all. We are trying to help him use his leadership abilities in a more positive manner and have discussed the matter with him. He has shown understanding, a very cooperative attitude, and for the most part is working to improve in this respect.

Children of Robert's age are usually interested in many things such as clubs, "secret societies" etc. Interest in these as a rule only last a short time until a new idea is conceived. Although instrumental in developing several such organizations in the group, Robert's activities in them have been very wholesome.

At times Robert does not appear to want to cooperate in other group activities. This may be an effort on his part, of which he is actually unaware, to assert himself and break away from parental or group authority in his attempt to become a person in his own right. We are trying to help him become cooperative at all times.

Robert's academic work shows some improvement. He is applying himself better in that he makes an attempt to do the work agreed upon but the quality is not as high as Robert is capable of achieving and work is done rather haphazardly. It would help if you could check him at home, as we are doing at school, to see if he is studying his spelling, preparing one piece of writing a week and doing some of out of school reading. He also needs practice in number facts. He has number charts to which he can refer to help himself. Perhaps a short period each night for study besides what he does at school would help him to improve the quality of his work more rapidly. In related arts Robert's work has been fair. He has difficulty staying with a job and has required much help in this respect. He is inclined to be rather erratic in his work.

Robert is an interesting child to work with.

Sincerely yours,  
Eloise C. Keebler  
Fourth Grade Teacher

## Spring Quarter

*Eloise K eebler,  
June 3, 1947*

Robert has made an effort this quarter to overcome some of the difficulties which were point out in the last report. His work generally has been of a high quality and he has shown more initiative regarding it. Sometimes it appears difficult for him to exercise a sufficient amount of self discipline and he has needed our help in this respect and in some situations involving his relationships with other children. But, on the whole, there has been improvement.

Over a period of years Robert seems to have shown great improvement in his adjustment to school. We believe that as he continues to mature many of his difficulties will diminish. We are glad to recommend him for fifth grade placement next year.

Thanks you for your fine cooperation this year and may all of you have a pleasant summer.

Sincerely yours,  
Eloise C. Keebler  
Fourth Grade Teacher

## Grade Five



It Will Be Beautiful  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

1947-1948

In the spring of 1947, Buddy Hitchcock told me his dad let him sign up for a paper route. If Buddy did something, I wanted to do it as well. Dad didn't agree to my plan for a number of good reasons. Mom, however, always the first in our family to see possibilities and work for change, approved.

### **Taste of Business**

Buddy signed up to deliver the *Columbus Dispatch* – the more popular, heavier, and more costly of the afternoon papers. Our Democrat-voting family subscribed to the *Columbus Citizen*, a Scripps-Howard newspaper and politically far more liberal than the Dispatch. Once school was out that summer, I went to the Citizen's nearby sub-station to enquire about my getting an afternoon paper route. The station manager put my name on his list

with the admonition that kids rarely gave up their routes in the summer.

Little did I know the work, or for that matter, the level of commitment it would take to become a successful paper carrier. Knowing only that my name was on the list, when the time came for my Canton visit, I left for the summer dreaming that I would be making money soon after my return.

### **Serpentine Hill**

Although Jay and I were to swim at Lake O'Springs again that summer, swimming was no longer the center of our lives. Perhaps it was because of the drowning. Whenever we arrived at the park I could still hear "Doing What Comes Naturally" in the back of my mind. Jay and I swam more in the shallow lake that summer, perhaps to get away from the bad memories of the girl in the tank, or maybe because we ( he ) was getting older and all the girls hung out on the sandy beach along the lake. We never spoke of it, but our trips to Lake O'Springs became less frequent as his interests began to change. I was twelve that summer and Jay and most of his friends were already fifteen.

With less frequent trips to Lake O'Springs, our bicycle trips to the nearby Canton City parks increased. The parks had always been places we visited on our bicycles. Sometimes we would ride north on Harrison Avenue and race down the steep wooded hillside near Fawcett Stadium. As our bicycling skills increased, we sometimes turned east on 12<sup>th</sup> Street to make a very high-speed run down the steep and winding Serpentine hill. We were very good bicyclists at that age, but the speeds we could attain going down Serpentine were far more dangerous than dealing with traffic – even on the country roads that took us to the lake. On Serpentine, we sometimes raced cars down the long steep incline that included two ninety-degree turns. We wouldn't admit it to one another, but the Serpentine run was scary, and a youthful bit of daring-do that we rarely did more than once a month – and never when we were alone.



Mostly, on our days spent in the city, we would ride our bicycles down the steep embankment overlooking McKinley park, or race down the small roads that connected Fawcett Stadium to the stream crossing at the foot of the hill in Stadium Park. Although less than a mile from where we once dammed Timken's creek, Stadium Park featured play equipment, small casting lakes, and organized summer activities that Jay and I sometimes found as much or more fun than swimming. Best of all, the Canton City parks were less than a mile from where we lived.

Now, a half century later, the places we played are the grounds of the National Football League Hall of Fame. The path from Fawcett Stadium down to Stadium Park is now a paved road that passes under Interstate 77 where it separates the park from the Hall of Fame. Today, some fifty-five thousand cars daily pass through a quiet and idyllic place once the province of pre-adolescents on bicycles.

Sometimes, summer days would include basketball played either in the basement of St. Joseph's Catholic Church on W. Tuscarawas Street, or in the driveway of one of Jay's school friends, Don Nehlen, who would become a nationally known football coach at West Virginia. I was far too short and slow to get in on the games, but I didn't mind watching, and getting to run down the balls that occasionally got away from the older boys.

Things changed that summer, in ways I didn't understand. Especially when Jay would go off with the older boys and leave me at home. Summers in Canton would be far less fun if I were left out of what the big kids were doing. Puberty had struck that summer, and I was left out.

### **Over the Handlebars**

One day, when Jay was engaged elsewhere, one of the neighbor boys, Junior Capiano, joined me for a bicycle trip to Stadium Park. Just as we left home, riding side-by-side northbound on Clarendon Avenue, our bicycles collided. Although Junior fell off the side of his bike and was uninjured, I was catapulted over

the handlebars into the curb. I was in immediate pain, having badly broken my left wrist. My bike was a shambles as well, but I recall carrying it back home in my right hand.

When my aunt came home she was at first terrified, and then visibly upset. Alma, in many ways my second mother, never had the sharp temper and combative personality of her sister. Still, I knew I was in the dog house well before my uncle Carl came home from work. I was in bad pain all afternoon, even after my aunt packed my swollen left wrist in ice. Perhaps because of the potential cost, I was put to bed that night still in terrific pain. By morning, after discussing the event with my parents, Alma took me to the family doctor downtown. He immediately told my Aunt to get me to Aultman Hospital. That afternoon I was taken into the emergency room, where I was scheduled for orthopedic re-break of the wrist that evening.

When I woke up the next morning, the pain had subsided and I was wearing a big heavy cast. Thus ended my outside adventures that summer. I was effectively grounded until my parents came to take Jay and me on a vacation trip in August. In the meantime I began to browse the magazine rack at Bachelor's drug store for Popular Science, Photography, Radio-Electronics and one of Hugo Gernsback or Isaac Asimov's exciting science fiction tales. While playing with the radio one night, I came across a science fiction program called *Tales of Tomorrow* on WCMW. Between my science oriented reading and the radio dramas I heard that summer, my imagination expanded well beyond the world I knew. Little did I suspect how the real and imagined world of science would become central in my life.

But it wasn't just things scientific that had caught my imagination. Unlike the real science of that era, with only 92 elements on the periodic table, the fictional world of science was future based. While at that age I was immensely interested in physics and electronics, so was my immense imagination set free by the concept of living not just now, or in the past, but in the limitless eras that lay ahead.

### **To the Soo and Beyond**

In August, while I was still in my cast, Jay and I left with my parents for a trip in the old Ford to far northern Michigan. With the war over, gasoline plentiful, and a few extra dollars my parents had saved, the Butche family took their first summer trip. After a couple of days driving north through Michigan, dad loaded the Ford onto a ferry that took us across the Straits of Mackinac to St. Ignace. The next day we drove all the way to Sault Saint Marie where we visited the Soo locks. I was very impressed with the locks and the giant ships passing between Lake Superior and Lake Huron. Jay and I watched in wonder as each ship was being raised or lowered to the elevation of its destination lake. Soon we were on our way across the upper peninsula and the Wisconsin Dells country. By the time we returned to Columbus, I was ready to have my cast removed and to begin a new school year.

The trip was fun, but I was largely bored and uncomfortable in the hot summer afternoons. I read my books and magazines in the car as there was nothing else to do. I did not know it, and could not have understood it, but I had become a fledgling omnivore that summer.

### **Becoming a Businessman**

When we returned to Columbus in late August dad took me to Children's Hospital to have my cast removed. My left wrist had healed well, but once the protective cast was gone, it remained tender. In September dad got the call from Jim McGuire, the District Circulation Manager for the *Columbus Citizen*. A route had opened up and my name was next on the list. Dad told McGuire I wasn't ready due to my injury. When McGuire told him that my name would go back to the end of the list if I didn't start the following week, he agreed to discuss it with me. Dad knew I wasn't physically up to what the route would require, but he agreed to let me sign up.

Handing 52 daily papers and trying to roll them with a sore left arm was painful. But, I paid the price, and as the weeks passed the money in my pocket made the pain more palatable.

My Citizen route, Station-A, number 4, was one of the largest in the area. The route included Warren Street between Summit and 4<sup>th</sup> Street all the way south to Goodale. I had little difficulty delivering the papers on weekday afternoons, but at first the Sunday papers were far too heavy. Dad, who arose at 5:15 a.m. daily, gave up several Sundays as I began to cope with the realities of having nearly 60 Sunday paper subscribers.

On the first Sunday morning, dad loaded us in the '37 Ford, picked up the papers at Station-A, and off we went. I made many errors by delivering Sunday papers to homes that only subscribed to the weekday paper. Soon after we were home the phone began to ring. I was in trouble. Embarrassed at my mistake, I went back at the station to pick up additional papers, for which I had to pay out of my own pocket. Then, in the daylight, I delivered the missing papers from my bicycle. When the day was over, dad said I should resign the paper route – for he was not going to ever take me around my route again. He relented the next couple of weeks, but we both knew eventually I was going to have to do Sunday mornings on my own.

There were charts on the wall at Station-A showing how much a carrier made each week ordered by the number of subscribers. On my route I would make \$5.50 every week and I desperately wanted the money. The top carrier in our station, Dick Leopard, had seventy-five subscribers, never had a missing paper call, and made nearly ten dollars a week. I was not in Dick Leopard's class, but I did not resign the paper route – although I secretly wanted to when dad stopped going with me on Sundays.

By the time my arm had fully healed, I had learned what it meant to make a commitment and how inconvenient it could be to keep one. I didn't care at all for the commitment, the work, or the hours. But if you carried newspapers in that era, you were somebody important. And you had money of your own. Bobby Butche,

bossy schoolboy, had become a businessman. The skills I learned carrying papers would serve me well – for not only did I have to deliver the papers, I also had to sell subscriptions and collect from my customers.

In those days we had to pay for our papers on Saturdays. Delivering newspapers was easy, I soon learned, compared to collecting for them. Although the weekly charge for daily papers was only twenty-seven cents a week, and only thirty-five cents if the subscriber got the Sunday paper, people on my route frequently didn't pay me for weeks. In the meantime I had to pay for their papers every Saturday. I was not permitted to stop service to people who didn't pay me. I became a tough collector, a skill that would serve me well in life as well. Sometimes, I was met with tears by people who couldn't pay, and at other times, I would be chased off the porch when I demanded payment.

When the harsh winter hit that year, dad occasionally helped me on Sundays, but no matter how bad the weather or how deep the snow, I was on my own for afternoon deliveries and Friday night collection work. Fortunately, I had something of a safe house on my route – a place where I could find respite from heavy rain or snow, or to get away from an angry customer upset that I demanded to be paid for delivering his paper.

My safe house was Engine House Number 4, at Hamlet and Lincoln streets where I soon came to know many of the firemen – especially those assigned to inhalator service duty. I had pretty much free run of the firehouse and sometimes I was invited to have supper with the firemen. My abilities to engage with adults, strengthened by having to learn how to get customers to pay me in what were very tough times, made it easy for me to fit in at the firehouse. I loved to listen to the men talk for their discussions were often in language, and on subjects, not heard at home or school. I soon adopted their macho attitudes and began to use their language. Doing so helped me greatly on my paper route, but tended to get me into trouble at school, or worse, at home.

One of the homes on my route always had several taxi-cabs waiting out front when I came before dawn on Sunday mornings, I had no idea why they needed so many taxis. I enjoyed having coffee with the ‘girls’ on cold mornings, or sitting on their porch on warm summer evenings when I was out collecting. When one of the other carriers told me why there were so many taxicabs, I was shocked. Later, another home on my route turned out to be the local communist cell headquarters. I soon learned not to deliver their paper on days when their activities were on the front page. When I did, they sometimes threw it back at me.

I also learned how to ‘milk’ the downtrodden and disheveled alcoholics that hung out at Oldfield’s Bar on Fourth Street. While delivering a paper to the owner, I would go along the bar and sell papers to the inebriated men. When they gave me too much money, I routinely failed to give them all their change – and I usually demanded a tip as well. Some were on to me, of course, but one or more of them contributed to my weekly profits. The good thing that was happening to me on the streets was largely an education in the realities of life, as well as how to make and manage money. The downside was diminished energy for school, little or no time for any home study, and an increasing awareness that University School was not part of the real world.

### **Nurturing the Omnivore**

On my first day in the fifth grade, I met a woman who was to change my life. She was Mary Jane Loomis, not only my new teacher, but one of America’s best known experts in the field of pre-adolescent education. Miss Loomis was totally unflappable. She shared fifth and sixth grade teaching duties, in two year sequences, with Katherine Burgess. Both were among the most popular elementary grade teachers with their students, but they had very different personalities and styles. Mary Jane Loomis was permissive with her students – giving them as much freedom as possible. Katherine Burgess, on the other hand, ran a more structured and disciplined classroom. While I enjoyed the freedom

in Loomis' classroom, those I would graduate with studied in the more traditional environment favored by Burgess.

Mary Jane Loomis was friendly, warm and loving with her pre-adolescent students. Although her permissive attitude provided freedom, she remained fully in control. Unlike Eloise Keebler who sought to keep her students reigned in and together, Mary Jane Loomis pushed and pulled her students to explore, experiment and press the envelope. Whatever it was about her skills or personality, Mary Jane Loomis was my favorite teacher. In the two years I was to be her student, she adroitly kept me focused on what was required of me while also encouraging me to explore anything and everything in sight.

Although I've never liked being called "Butche", Miss Loomis preferred using my last name – although everyone else in the class was referred to by their first name. The way she used it, seemed to me, more intimate, as if perhaps it was a nickname. So what I heard was "Butchey." Decades later, when I often invited Miss Loomis to my home with family and friends, she persisted in calling me "Butchey", at a time I would have rudely stopped anyone else from addressing me that way.

At the center of our work in Mary Jane Loomis' fifth-grade was the Weekly Reader, which was used in her class not only for reading skill development, but to my great delight, for its content. The



Katherine Burgess - ca 1950

1948 Presidential campaign was already of immense interest to most Americans in the fall of 1947. Thanks to Mary Jane Loomis, and the Weekly Reader, I became fully engaged in the upcoming

1948 election. My parents were both strong Democrats who believed that Franklin D. Roosevelt deserved to be the permanent President of the United States. When he died suddenly, in 1945, Harry Truman became our President. I knew he had ordered the use of the Atomic Bomb, and I had come to recognize his voice on the radio. I knew nothing of politics, but I liked Harry Truman's direct, and to the point way of speaking.

According to the Weekly Reader, President Truman was going to run for President with someone I'd never heard of before, Alben Barkley, from Kentucky. I was amazed that the Republicans, on the other hand, had many potential candidates and that one of them was a former Governor of Ohio, John Bricker. Although the election was still a year away, the conflict and ideas of politics captured my imagination. Perhaps it was the drama of politics, the simplified view of life projected by the Weekly Reader, or the encouragement of Miss Loomis, but young Robert's sudden surge in interest in reading was driven by politics. Before long, I discovered books about science, and, to my great joy, science-fiction. Mary Jane Loomis pressed the matter of reading by encouraging me and asking me questions about everything in which I was interested. Then she would ask me, "Maybe you should ask Miss Heller about what else you might read about that."

Mary Jane Loomis was a teacher and a cheer-leader for her students. We learned from Loomis that we could let our imaginations run wild as long as what we wanted to write about had some relevance to school. I began to read the *Columbus Citizen* newspaper that year, and sometimes I included news events in the fanciful and imaginative stories I wrote. Mary Jane Loomis knew I was an omnivore, interested in nearly everything, and anxious to know more about the world around me. She made reading the key to extending both my knowledge and my omnivorous interests.

### **Lamp of Knowledge**

Late in fall quarter, the weather turned cold and we had the first hint of snow. We had been studying climate and weather





Fifth graders Jack Hock, Kip Patterson, Robert Butche with University School  
Elementary science teacher Lewis Evans  
WOSU "School of the Air " broadcast.  
Photo: OSU Archives

instruments with science teacher Lew Evans. Kip and I were fascinated by the instruments and the notion of collecting and recording information about weather. One day, when I brought up the possibility of building a weather station with Kip Patterson, his enthusiasm about the project was very high. Even more importantly, Kip's knowledge of the instruments was far more advanced than mine, as was his understanding of the mathematics involved in computing relative humidity. One day I went to Miss Loomis and proposed that Kip and I build a full weather station.

"Where would you put it, Butchey?" she asked.

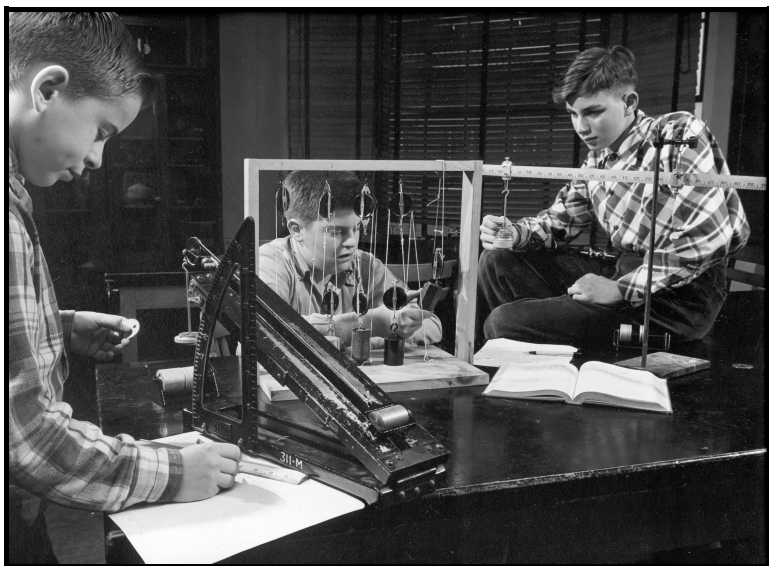
"Outside the front window," I told her with the degree of assurance typical of youngsters filled with more enthusiasm than understanding.

"We don't have a front window, Butchey."

“Yes we do, Miss Loomis,” I responded, pointing to the high windows at the back of the room overlooking Woodruff avenue.

What Miss Loomis didn't know was that Kip and I had already crawled up to the high windows and determined that just outside was the Lamp of Knowledge structure above the main entrance to the school. More in tribute to Miss Loomis' confidence in her students, than evidence of meteorological skill on the parts of 11 year olds Kip and Bob, she agreed to let us install weather instruments outside the window.

Before long, visitors to University School saw weather monitoring equipment appear on and around the lamp of knowledge. That winter, Kip and I recorded weather data several times a day. Our log contained temperature, dew point, cloud cover, wind direction and speed. It was a marvelous achievement of progressive education.



Science Class - Mechanics  
University School Photo by David Curl  
OSU Archives

Best of all, for precocious eleven year olds, Bob and Kip's Weather Station provided an ongoing excuse for almost daily trips outside the window to attend to equipment or to read instruments. The University School weather station proved to be a joyful adventure that year – and one that foretold much of what Kip and Bob would do in their adult lives as well.

**University School Fees and Tuition  
1948-49 Academic Year**

Incidentals	\$15.00
Laboratory Fee	\$10.00
Medical Fee	\$ 1.00
Gymnasium Fee	\$ 1.00
Lunch Fee	\$24.00
Textbook Fee	\$ 1.00
Total:	\$52.00

## Fifth Grade Class Photo



Photo: OSU Archives

Back Row: David Richter, Robert Butche, Dennis Flanders, Lyn Mumma, Miss Mary Jane Loomis, Marsha Samuels, Kay Rita Turner, Martha Dale, Jack Hock.

Middle: Jackie White, Billy Wright, David Lucas, Allison Hedrick, Karen Sperber, Shirley Stoughton, Millicent Ramey, Jane Bittermann, Philip Tinsky, John Ramseyer, Jr.

Front: Steve Kaplan, Ted Oberteuffer, Kip Patterson, Jim Grant, Todd Bogatay.

## Fifth Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Parent- Teacher Conference,  
Mrs. Butche,  
December 4, 1947*

Mary Jane Loomis

George and Gretchen Butche

( From notes taken by and signed by Gretchen H. Butche )

Story writing good - except for spelling. Illustrations good, exceptionally good ideas and interesting.

Physical education - improvement - cooperative and gets along well with other students. Spelling – needs more study. Not hard for him, but he doesn't spend enough time in learning.

Numbers – Good - has some perfect papers. Gets all work in on time.

Story writing - some papers not in to date. Classmates like him and he gets along well with girls and boys alike.

His teachers think he is well informed on many current news subjects and has a wholesome attitude toward his school work and things in general.

Has completed project in workshop.( Bookcase )

Need for study in spelling.

Signed

Gretchen Butche

## Winter Quarter Report

*Mary Jane Loomis,  
March 19, 1948*

During the winter quarter Bob has continued to make satisfactory progress in most aspects of his school program. He is usually dependable about meeting both his individual and group responsibilities. Occasionally he allows an individual pursuit to draw too heavily on group time. His leadership ability is commendable. We are anxious to help him exercise this ability in desirable ways rather than in using it in the ways that cause people to lose faith in him.

Bob seems to find the group study, The British Empire, Today and Yesterday quite interesting, and he does a reasonably good job with the research reading and discussions involved. However, "reasonably good" is not good enough for Bob, and we are anxious to see him more nearly measure up to his ability.

In the language arts area Bob works quite successfully. However, we should like to see him read more widely, achieve a perfect record in handling the weekly spelling lists, and improve the quality of his written expression. In quantity, Bob has done considerably more than the agreed amount. For this he is to be commended. We feel that the objectives suggested are well within Bob's capabilities.

Bob's work in arithmetic shows growth in both understanding and accuracy. We know that his business affairs afford him much splendid practical experience. He needs to be more dependable about completing and turning in his various practice materials. The weather station's success has been due largely to

Bob's interest and enthusiasm. It has been a very profitable experience for the entire group.

In music activities Bob is not energetic enough about developing his abilities. He has a very nice voice and is capable of doing splendid work in this group. His talent suggests greater progress with the bass viol, too. He needs to follow a set practice schedule and meet his lesson periods as scheduled. Bob reads music very well and has an outstanding ear for it. With concentrated effort he should make a fine bass player.

Bob's work in physical education activities shows improved skills and interest. He continues to need to improve in group cooperation.

The fall quarter conference with you concerning Bob's progress and needs has been very helpful to us. We hope you will come again whenever you have the opportunity to do so.

Sincerely yours,  
Mary Jane Loomis  
Fifth Grade Teacher

## Spring Quarter

*Mary Jane Loomis,  
June 11, 1948*

Bob has completed his year's work in the fifth grade with a good degree of success, and we are happy to recommend him for placement in the sixth grade this fall.

Throughout the spring quarter Bob has made a more consistent effort to meet his agreements and to improve his relationships with his classmates. He has so much to offer that we are anxious to see him strive to measure up to his capabilities. His leadership ability is commendable when thoughtfully channeled.

Bob has made substantial gains in the academic phases of his work, but he does not maintain the standards of accomplishment that are in keeping with his ability. We are eager to see him resolve to do his very best more consistently next year. We feel sure he would find the results quite gratifying.

In the music area Bob is very talented. All of us were delighted with Bob's work in Robin Hood. We hope that next year Bob can follow through more successfully in instrumental music.

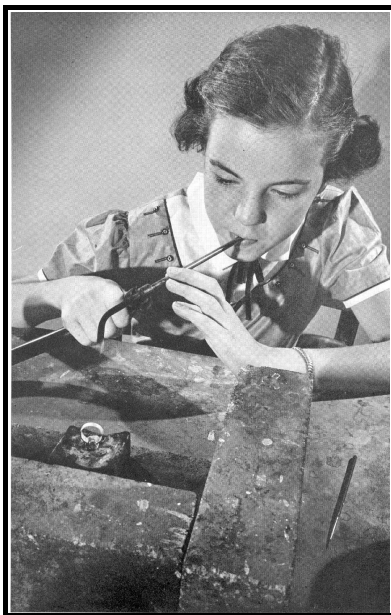
In physical education Bob is becoming a better participating group member. He also shows improvement in preparing for class. However, he continues to quit when things are not to his liking. This problem we hope he will work on next year.

We have enjoyed working with Bob and we shall look forward to having him again as a sixth grader. We hope you all will have a very pleasant summer.

Sincerely yours,  
Mary Jane Loomis  
Fifth Grade Teacher



## Grade Six



The Ring Maker  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1948-1949*

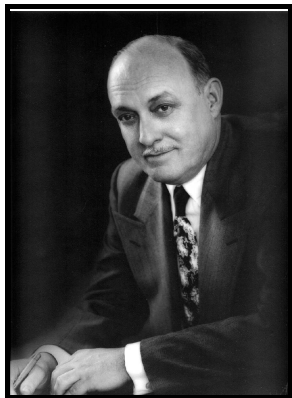
America changed dramatically in the years after the end of World War II. Although there were massive lay-offs in nearly all war related manufacturing in 1945, most war plants converted back to producing goods for the consumer and industrial goods markets. New cars, appliances and household goods flooded into showrooms and stores. By 1948, America was back in business. Jobs were increasingly plentiful for American workers. Thanks to the GI Bill, millions of veterans were enrolling in college, or were in the market for a home. Money was available, and people's attitudes were increasingly upbeat and forward-looking.

### **America On the Move**

In our neighborhood, families we had known for years began to move out. Some chose to move to more stable neighborhoods, but one of our neighbors openly talked about building a home of their own. Little did I know that my parents would soon be part of the most significant social change of the era – the flight of the middle class to suburban neighborhoods.

### **Dreamers and Swindlers**

Thanks largely to the GI Bill, America's returning servicemen had money to spend. Within two years, twelve million war veterans returned home. Millions of them married and, by virtue of government loan guarantees, these families entered an already crowded home market. The housing shortage was so severe that many GI families slept in old streetcars and even chicken coops while others attended college classes in ramshackle buildings and newly erected Quonset huts. What America needed, President Truman told the country, was a massive new housing program. With the government ready to throw money at the problem, men like Frank Lloyd Wright and Buckminster Fuller



Carl Strandlund

sought to participate in Truman's efforts to build new and affordable housing.

Shortly after Curtiss-Wright closed their warplane factory at Port Columbus, mom was out of a job. When she learned that a Chicago man, Carl Strandlund, was planning to build houses at the plant, she began to dream – not just of having another good paying factory job, but also of having a home of our own. Strandlund's company, Lustron, came to life when the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, at the behest of President Truman, agreed to loan



Lustron Home in Winter  
Photo: Michael O'Neil

thirty-six million dollars to Lustron. Although it would take over a year to tool-up the huge factory on E. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, once in full operation Strandlund's company planned to build one hundred new *Lustron* homes every day.

Mom immediately applied for a job at Lustron. Unfortunately, her skills at marshaling together and expediting delivery of airplane parts and assemblies during the war offered little value during the tooling-up phase. She was offered an office job, but it paid far less. She would wait. In the meantime, the more she heard about Strandlund's ideas, the more she dreamed of moving us into a Lustron. That summer, unbeknownst to me, my parents began to discuss buying a home of their own. Although the dream was very

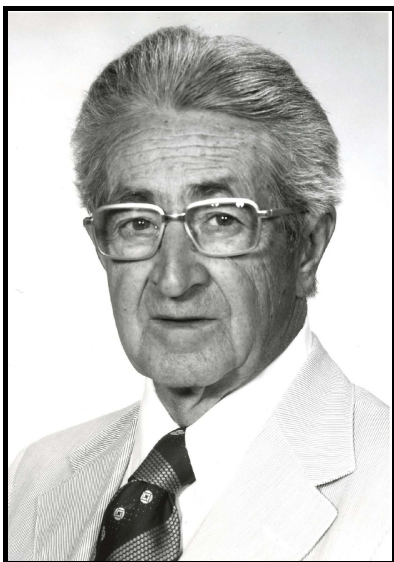
real, the resources needed to make it a reality didn't exist. But such dreams are not easily extinguished.

### **Karl Klassen's Secret**

Until that summer, I never fully understood the pain my dad endured every two weeks when Karl Klassen injected fluid into his left lung cavity. Having a nine-inch needle inserted between the ribs was not only painful, but it made long trips and vacations all but impossible.

In late June, dad and I drove to Dr. Klassen's office for my semi-annual chest X-ray examination. Karl Klassen was a strong and forceful man, very much a genius, a gifted surgeon, and capable of behaving like a tyrant whenever he thought it necessary. I liked Klassen, especially when he spoke to me in adult language, or described things in colorful medical terminology. To some degree, I related well to Klassen because he was an Alpha Male. That was never dad's role in our family. After listening to my lungs and checking my breathing volume, Dr. Klassen would insert my x-ray on his viewing table and examine my chest. It was clear of any lesions, as it always had been. Klassen was always pleased to tell me that I had not contracted TB under his care.

I remember Dr. Klassen sending dad out of the room that afternoon so he could speak to me privately. It was then that Klassen reminded me, as he had done so many times before, that chil-



Karl Peter Klassen, M.D.  
Photo: OSU Archives

dren of tubercular parents are especially susceptible to infection. Dad's left lung, he explained, was still infected, but by being collapsed the contagion was far less likely to be exhaled. It was then that Dr. Klassen told me that dad needed to have



White Cross Hospital

Photo: Columbus Metropolitan Libraries

his infected lung removed. Dad, he said, had agreed to the procedure as soon as arrangements could be made.

Thus, Karl Klassen became a major figure in all our lives that summer. Mom was not at all willing to go along with the surgery once she understood that the odds of dad's survival were no better than fifty-fifty. By July, mom gave in. Dad was willing to accept the risk, and that was what really mattered. In late July, dad's siblings were notified. George H. Butche became one of Karl Klassen's first tubercular pneumonectomies. The surgery was scheduled for White Cross hospital in early August.

No matter the surgical risks, there was a great deal more to be concerned about. Dad was a pack-a-day smoker, nearly fifty-years of age, and weakened by his ongoing bout with tuberculosis. In 1947, before antibiotics were in widespread use in hospitals, infections were treated using sulfa based drugs – which carried substantial risks of kidney failure.

Unlike today, surgery at hospitals in the 1940's was performed in operating rooms without air conditioning. Heart-lung machines didn't exist, and intubation was unheard of, which meant that dad had to breathe for himself during the procedure.

What Klassen didn't tell us that summer, was that the risks of tubercular infection were sufficient for White Cross to prohibit tuberculosis related treatment or surgery. Dr. Klassen probably got around this issue by admitting dad for the procedure as non-tubercular. The stakes were high for everyone, but it was dad who had his life on the line.

When mom explained the risks to me, I was fearful of losing dad. But, no matter the risks, dad was unwilling to live a life of endless injections. It took a couple of weeks for dad to arrange for time-off from work, and to schedule the surgery. The surgery would take place in early August - in the middle of the hot and humid Ohio summer.

Then came the call from Lustron. There was a factory position opening. She should report to work the following Monday. Suddenly, our household was upside down. My trip to Canton had already been cancelled, and now mom had to turn down the job she would need to survive were anything to happen to dad. Everyone dreaded what lay ahead.

### **Breaking the Rules**

For me, the best news was that dad would be at White Cross Hospital – for notwithstanding their policy of no children visitors, I effectively had the run of the place. White Cross was located across the street from Goodale Park – only a few blocks from our apartment. To earn extra money that summer, I had signed on to sell papers at White Cross. They may have had a rule against children in the hospital, but it didn't apply to me. I would be there every day.

When the day came for dad to be admitted, I was confident, that no matter the risks, Karl Klassen could do anything. Fortunately not even mom had told me that the odds of survival were fifty-fifty or less, or that dad would be laid up for weeks if he survived. Even today, after fifty years of medical progress, the risk for pneumonectomy surgery is in the ten to twelve percent range. Although mom and dad could not possibly have afforded the

procedure, the surgery and hospitalization costs were covered by the medical benefits package Timken provided to its employees under its labor agreement with the United Steelworkers.

The surgery started early on a Monday morning. It would be nearly 12 hours before dad would be returned to his room. Meanwhile, dad's mother, and all of his brothers and sisters waited all afternoon in the stifling heat and humidity. Their arguments and bickering added to mom's stress, but it is clear she needed their support far more than mine. When the time came for me to deliver papers I left. When I returned that evening I made my rounds of the hospital – keeping the last paper for my mom.

Dad's room faced Goodale park. In the dog days of August, his windows were open day and night. Finally, around 8 pm, they wheeled dad back into his room. He had survived the surgery and recovered from the after effects of drip-ether anaesthesia. The vigil had begun.

It was chaos in dad's room with so many people. Dad was conscious, but not for long. When he passed out, dad's mother, Rose Goodman Butche, became hysterical – which triggered emotional outbursts from dad's sisters, Rosie and Marie. Dad's brothers, Walter and Bill were so shaken they went outside to sit on the hospital steps. When grandma got out of hand, mom exploded and ran everyone, including me out of the room. I went home, but mom stayed in that hospital room for three miserable days.

During the vigil, I was responsible for the house – doing laundry for mom as well as dad, and delivering things to the hospital. With school out there was little, other than my paper route to keep me engaged. While I was drawn to the hospital room, and at the hospital every afternoon to sell papers, the unending silence in the room and the oppressive heat from the afternoon sun was more than I wanted. After finishing my paper rounds, I would go by the room to give mom a paper. She would tell me about dad's progress, if any, and never even look at the paper. After a while I would go across the street to Goodale park and lay under

a tree until dinner time when I would help mom feed dad, collect the sweaty laundry and take it home for washing.

Dad was in critical condition for about a week. When his fever finally broke, mom returned home at night. The following week, my aunt and uncle came down from Canton to visit dad in the hospital. That weekend, they took me back to Canton with them – so I would be out of mom’s way when dad finally came home. Dad was in the hospital for several weeks that summer. He survived the ordeal and lived another quarter-century with only one lung. Neither his missing lung, nor his tubercular infection contributed to his death. Karl Klassen had worked a miracle.

### **Phil Tinsky’s Radio With Pictures**

When school started that fall, Miss Loomis asked each of us to tell about our summer adventures. I was certain mine had been the most interesting so I told about dad’s surgery. The next kid to speak was Philip Tinsky, who lived in Clintonville. “My dad plans to buy a television set,” he told us, “as soon as the coaxial cable gets to Cleveland.”

Well, that got my attention. I had heard mom talking about



Shop Teacher Victor Hoffman  
with Bill Lewis, John Jacob and Phil Tinsky

radios with pictures, but now I knew it was something called television and Phil had convinced me that television operated over a special wire that was being built in Cleveland. In the weeks that followed, Phil reported that the coaxial cable was already in Philadelphia and that construction had started to take the cable through the Pennsylvania mountains. What a wonderful age I was living



in. Radio was soon going to have pictures that were so exciting they would have to be sent over the mountains to Cleveland. I couldn't wait. My scientific interests, and my budding interest in broadcasting, piqued my yearning to experience this new phenomena.

Autumn quarter was very busy for me due largely to my interest in the presidential race. Even as school started that year, I was openly supporting Harry Truman for another term. My parents were amazed by my interest in politics, but not always understanding of my propensity to interrupt adult visitors to our apartment who said anything positive about Tom Dewey, or our Ohio Republican Senator, John Bricker. One of my dad's brothers, my uncle Bill, who favored Truman, was prone to becoming enraged when I, a mere kid, argued in favor of my own political ideas.

By October, according to what I read in the *Columbus Citizen*, Governor Dewey appeared to be the sure winner. National polling indicated that the Dewey-Bricker ticket had a sizeable, and increasing lead. I was dumbfounded and very disappointed, but I still promoted Truman to every adult who would engage in a political discussion with a twelve year old. Dad, who by then was back at work, took note of my political interests, but refused to discuss the election with me.

Like so many other Americans, I went to bed election night disappointed in the belief that Tom Dewey was to be our new president. The next morning, I was astonished to learn that Truman had confounded all the pundits and pulled off one of the most unexpected reversals in American politics. I was so thrilled that I went to school the next day and bragged about Truman's success. Miss Loomis let me tell my story and congratulated me on being so interested in politics. I basked in her praise and reveled at the satisfaction of being a newly-minted Democrat.

When Miss Loomis enquired if anyone else had news to share with the class, Phil Tinsky told us that the coaxial cable was almost all the way to Pittsburgh. It will be all the way to Cleveland by the spring. "There was already a television station in Ohio,"

Phil told us, “and another one will be built here in Columbus next year.” The Cincinnati station, W8XCT, was owned by Powell Crossley, who also owned the nation’s most powerful radio station, WLW. Crossley was already experimenting with televising Cincinnati Reds baseball. When I told dad that the Reds games were being televised, he showed some interest. He was a lifelong Cincinnati fan who listened to every game on the radio. Dad began to share my interest in television. Or, so I thought.

I don’t know how Phil knew all this stuff, but with the election over, and Harry Truman safely in office for another four years, I could turn my full attention to the magic of television. I didn’t really know what it was, but the idea of seeing live pictures of something happening elsewhere captivated my imagination as had nothing before.

### **Watershed Years**

My two years with Mary Jane Loomis were an important watershed in my life. In her hands, I discovered satisfaction through intellectual effort and accomplishment. Our class study of South America had been eye opening and challenging – but the sixth grade was a watershed in other ways as well. My omnivorous tendencies were starting to pull me in many directions. My new paper route, carrying the morning *Ohio State Journal* to subscribers between First and Fifth avenues and High and Summit streets was far larger and financially more rewarding than my *Columbus Citizen* route had been. Although I was up each morning with my dad at 5:15 am, I finished the route and was at school early every day. Miss Loomis liked seeing me early every day, a morning *Journal* in hand, reading about the world far beyond our classroom.

I continued to be interested in meteorology, although the weather station Kip and I had built was fast becoming history.

### **The Red Hornet**

Now that I was a businessman, or at least a kid with a profitable paper route, spending the entire summer in Canton was

no longer in the cards. Even before school was out, I read a story in the *Columbus Citizen* about the forthcoming Soap Box Derby. According to the story, kids who applied to race in the Columbus event, would be given free wheel and axle sets. I figured that with the wheels being free I could cover the remainder of the expenses for wood, steering-gear pulleys and paint. That may have been true, but from the time the wheel's arrived that spring, it was clear I was in far over my head. I had no idea where to start, nor the skills to even decide what materials needed to be bought.

Although the rules required that the soap box racer be built entirely by me with little or no parental supervision, dad decided what to buy, how to build the frame and even how to fabricate the steering system. Although I helped, I understood little of the process. When it was nearly finished, I decided to paint it bright red. In late July, we did the final assembly outside our back porch. My racer was magnificent – and I was so anxious to show it off that I loaded my papers in it that afternoon and took the racer with me on my paper route. It was ungainly to push the racer and try to steer it from the outside, but I persisted.

Along the way I got to show my red racer to my favorite customers – including all of the men at Firehouse #4. Knowing that the rules required that I built the racer, when asked, I told everyone that I had done so without any help. On the way home that evening, while pushing the racer along Summit Street I inadvertently snagged the right front wheel on a parked car twisting the axle. Dad was furious that I had taken the racer on my paper route and declared he would have nothing more to do with the project.

So I set to work, called the race office and explained that I had damaged the front axle in an accident while testing the steering. To my amazement they said they would exchange a new axle assembly for the damaged one if I brought the damaged unit to their supply house. I removed the bent axle from the racer one morning, with the two heavy steel wheels still attached. Then I loaded the fifty pound assembly onto the basket of my bicycle and headed downtown. It was nearly impossible to steer the bike with

such an ungainly load on the front wheel, but I finally got it to the warehouse. They wondered why I had brought the heavy wheels when all they agreed to replace was the bent axle. I had no answer, for I was still very much thinking like the kid I was. Fortunately, they removed the wheels and gave me a new axle still in its original box.

Dad was not pleased when he found me trying to install the new axle in the racer, but when his instructions failed to solve the problems, he turned the car onto its top and made it look easy. When we were done I asked if he was still going to take me to the race in August. He said he'd think about it. So I told mom how dangerous it would be for me to push the racer the three miles from where we lived all the way to the Grandview Avenue hill. Within a few days, dad agreed to take me to the race.

To my considerable delight, I won the first race – not yet understanding that the Soap Box Derby was run in heats and that I would have to race many more times if I were to win the Columbus event. Although I won my second race easily, I was beat out by a few inches in the third race. It was all over. I would not be going to the National Soap Box Derby that summer.

Of all the cars in the race that year, mine was among the most clumsy and least sophisticated. It seemed that many other fathers helped in the building of the racers. Perhaps their dads were less concerned about their racers being entirely adult designs and aerodynamically styled. Even so, I beat several snazzy cars in the races I won that day.

### **The Radio Bug**

My experiences at WOSU with University School's Elementary science teacher Lewis Evans provided me an inside view of broadcasting not available to other sixth graders. I enjoyed participating in his School of the Air broadcasts and found myself strangely attracted to nearly every aspect of broadcasting. Sometimes I would hang around the WOSU radio studios on 17<sup>th</sup> avenue, little more than a block from school. I liked to watch the engineers

in the control room, and the announcers reading scripts and pronouncing the strange names of classical music composers and artists.

Miss Tolbert, our music teacher, had been playing classical records for us in music class. It was nothing like what I heard on the radio at home, and sometimes classical music sounded meaningless, or even dumb. But there was something about it that filled one of my omnivorous needs.

WOSU had several classical music programs in those days. My changeover from carrying the Citizen to the Journal freed up my afternoons. That fall, I increasingly found myself hanging around in the WOSU lobby. From there I could see into the sacred inner sanctum of studio A with its boom microphones and sound effects equipment. When I was run out of the control room area, I would park myself on the sofa in the lobby area. In the afternoons I could listen to the classical music program on the large monitor speakers. One day, the station played Ravel's Scheherazade with its rich and harmonious tonalities and vibrant, complex melodies. I was captivated, and from that day forward, my knowledge and enjoyment of classical music steadily grew. Little might I have guessed, that years later, I would find myself in the middle of a raging war in a far away land with only the joyous sounds of Scheherazade to mask the noise of war that surrounded me.

One of the men at the radio station asked me if I could read. This seemed a strange question, for I was twelve years old. Of course I could read. His use of the word, however, was not what I thought. The man was the director of a child-oriented dramatic program scheduled to begin a few minutes later. One of his college student actors had not shown up and he needed someone to read the part of a kid my age. His request seemed logical, and the opportunity to be around the equipment and *on the radio* was itself exciting. So, I nodded yes. In a whoosh, I was back in studio C, where the college student actors performed their child oriented dramatic programs.

“You’ve only have two lines,” the director explained, showing me where my character appeared in the script. Soon three other adults were in the small studio and the program began. While I had been around the radio station for a couple of years, all of my ‘on-air’ experiences has been answering Lew Evans’ questions, not reading from a script.

When the time came for me to read my first line, I missed the cue. In the pregnant pause that followed, one of the student actors motioned for me to speak. I began to read the line, but was suddenly overcome with mike-freight. With that my stuttering kicked in and I stammered badly. To my credit, however, I didn’t miss the second cue a few lines later. I did continue to stutter, however, much to the delight of the director. When the program was over the man who had asked me to read the part came in and told me I had done a great job on such short notice. I was on cloud nine, certain at that moment that I would have a great future in broadcasting. Although I was destined for many interesting experiences in both local and network radio, I never imagined that my interest in broadcasting would one day include negotiating the purchase of stations in Cincinnati, Ohio and Washington, D.C.

The more I was around the radio station the more interested I became in Phil Tinsky’s stories about the soon to be completed coaxial cable. Before the end of the school year, Phil came to class one day with the news: His dad had, in fact, purchased a seven inch Hallicrafters television set. When school was out one afternoon, I rode my bike to Phil’s home at the end of Brighton Road where it dead ends at the Olentangy River. Phil, who had taken the bus home, was already on the porch waiting for me. Moments later we were in the house and there in the living room was the most exciting thing I had ever seen. Phil had turned on the TV, and from the moment the little screen began to glow, I was drawn to it as a moth to a flame.

What I saw that day was little more than dancing black and white dots accompanied by an eerie hiss. I remember sitting down on the floor in front of the TV and marveling at the wonders of

coaxial cables. Although I fancied myself something of a budding electronics expert, Phil finally had to explain that, near as he could tell, this wasn't really a TV program we were watching. "WLW is building a television station here," he assured me, but for now we get all of our programs from Cincinnati. The programs," Phil assured me earnestly, "are even better than this." Bobby Butche was totally captivated by television.

That night at dinner I told my parents I had seen television. "Well it's coming soon," my mother assured me. To my surprise, my dad joined in the conversation. "There's a new store selling television sets on High street."

As soon as I was out of school the next afternoon, I headed down High Street on my bike. At the north-west corner of Lincoln and High, was a radio repair shop. I took my

portable radio into the owner for new batteries. Making a purchase, I was certain, would assure that I wouldn't be tossed out. The owner of that shop was Ralph Corbin, not yet thirty, with rugged features and blonde hair. Corbin was a friendly man, except when his wife was around, had an easy, outgoing personality and an affinity for convertibles. I immediately knew he was my kind of guy.

While Corbin worked on my little radio, I asked if I could turn on his television set.



Tinsky's Hallicrafters TV  
Photo: TV History Dunedin

“It’s over there along the wall,” he told me. “Might as well turn it on,” he said, “they sign on at five o’clock.”

I turned on the TV and waited for it to warm up. It was a tabletop RCA TV with an 9 inch screen that was soon filled with snow.

“Pretty good picture,” I suggested. Ralph laughed under his breath before assuring me, “I put that goddamned antenna up another ten feet last night . . .”

Before he could finish, there appeared a faint image that looked like a wiggling Indian in a snow storm.

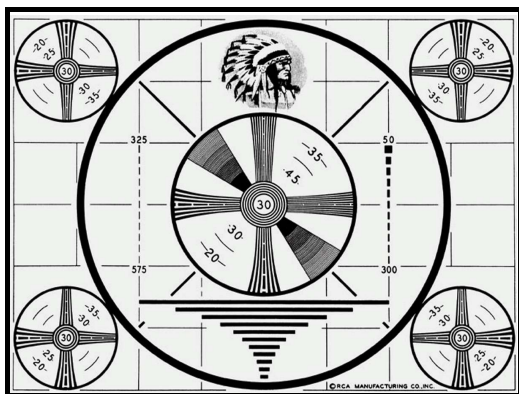
“That’s WLW-T,” Corbin said as he was closing up my portable radio. “I think Peter Grant will be on in a moment . . .”

Suddenly, at precisely 5 o’clock, the snowy screen began to display a ghostly image of a man. The annoying tone had stopped and I could – clearly make out among in the hissing noise. “This is WLW-T, channel five, Cincinnati.”

Watching WLW’s Peter Grant in Cincinnati from the quiet of Ralph Corbin’s little radio shop was the most exciting experience of my young life. After that, I was back nearly every afternoon to watch snowy pictures from afar dancing on that small screen. Before long, Corbin began to treat me as a regular around

his store, giving me chores to do around the shop, and let me watch him test tubes and fix radios.

By the time the weather turned warm in April, Ralph asked me to help him load the RCA TV into the trunk of his red Chevrolet



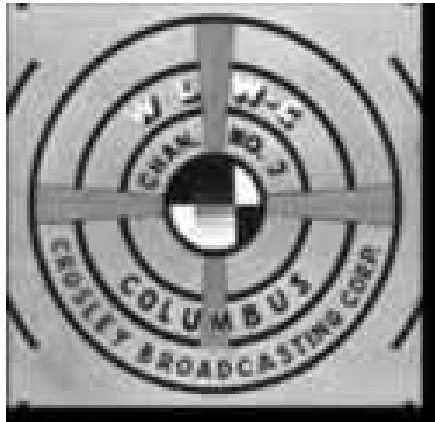
RCA's Indian Head Test Pattern  
ca. 1949



convertible. The good news was that Corbin had sold his first TV to a family near where he and his wife lived on North Fourth Street.

It was a beautiful, cool, and sunny morning as Ralph drove us up 4<sup>th</sup> Street with the top down and the wind blowing in our hair. I had never ridden in a convertible before which made the event all the more memorable. Ralph was full of jokes and having a great time that morning.

When we began to set-up the TV, Ralph told me to turn on channel three first to see if the new Columbus station was on the air. When the set warmed up, there was the WLW-C test pattern. It was April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1949. Television had come to Columbus.



### **First Love**

As spring approached, I discovered I was in love. Shirley Stoughton, to her considerable embarrassment, as I recall, had stolen my heart. Sometimes I stopped at her home nearby the school early in the morning so we could walk the last couple of blocks together. I couldn't tell her about my sudden strong feelings, but that spring it was increasingly clear I had a crush on Shirley. Finally one day, I told her during class that I was in love with her and that I wanted to marry her. Her reaction, although predictable, came as a rude shock to me. At hearing the news, Shirley broke out into tears and began to cry and sob so much she had to leave the room. Miss Loomis wanted to know what I had done to her. "Nothing," I said, "Nothing at all."

I decided not to tell anyone else of my disappointment, although it was clear that all of my classmates capable of understanding my plight already knew. Years later, Shirley played Fiona in Miss Tolbert's musical production of Lerner and Lowe's Brigadoon. Not yet thirteen, I had already loved and lost.

### **Moving On**

Over the winter, my dad's aunt and uncle, who lived on the east side of town, both passed away. There were plenty of family squabbles over who got what from their estate, but when everything was settled my dad told me we would be moving to their old house at the corner of Kelton Avenue and Mound Street later that summer.

My playmates, my secret places, my paper route, Ralph's television store, and even my friends at Firehouse #4 would soon be gone. So would the innocence of my childhood, for that spring, one of the Italian girls from my old paper route invited me into their Hamlet Street home. She was very pretty, with deep Italian features and long flowing black hair. I pretty much knew what she had on her mind, for she was at least two years older than I. As nature took its course, I was first consumed in delight then fear, for I was the first to hear her father slam the front door. He raced up the stairs only to find me, britches still at my knees, diving out the bedroom window, onto the little roof over their porch, and well on my way to my bicycle.

That was the last time I visited that part of Hamlet Street. Life was moving on, and so was our small family.

Shortly after school was out in June of 1949, we moved. As we did, WLW-C finished construction on it's tower on Olentangy Boulevard from which it soon began broadcasting test patterns on channel 3. A few weeks later, WBNS-TV began transmitting as well. By that fall, Phil Tinsky's promise of the coaxial cable coming to Columbus became reality. I missed all of it – for there were no television stores anywhere near our new home.

## Sixth Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Self-Report,  
Robert Butche,  
December 14, 1948*

Dear mother and dad,

Group membership

I always try to be a good member of the class and try to enter into discussions. Every once in a while I find myself blaming someone else for what I do.

Study habits

I'm still improving. I'm studying my spelling harder, taking my math home, and I'm meeting a deadline right now.

Sincerely,  
Bob

## Winter Quarter

*Mary Jane Loomis,  
February 9, 1949*

### Reason for Conference: Report on Progress

Points Discussed: Perfect record in spelling. Written expression improving – needs to improve spelling in written expression. Good record in math. He understands from general instructions, need no special instruction.

Learn multiplication tables.

## Spring Quarter

*Mary Jane Loomis,  
June 8, 1949*

Bob's last year of elementary school has been very successful in most respects and we are happy to recommend him for placement in the seventh grade this fall. Bob's abilities as a thinker, planner, and doer are highly respected by his classmates. When they feel that he is bossy they say so, and he hastens to explain the he does not mean to be, that he just gets interested in making things work out. Group affairs as well as individual interests get his undivided attention in turn.

In the various aspects of the group study on South America Bob has made many fine contributions, and he exercised splendid leadership in his committee work. He gave his all to the success of both Pan American programs.

Bob's growth in the more measured skill areas has been gratifying. His reading ability showed growth of more than two years. In mathematics he has made approximately one and a half years gain, and in spelling his gain has been about three years. In the related arts areas Bob has been a consistent and conscientious worker most of the time. Occasionally he is unwilling to take the suggestions of the teachers. His work on the television set this quarter combined very nicely his science interests with work in the arts shop. Bob's interest in part singing is very keen at this time. Mr. Parlette recommended summer study on the bass viol for him.

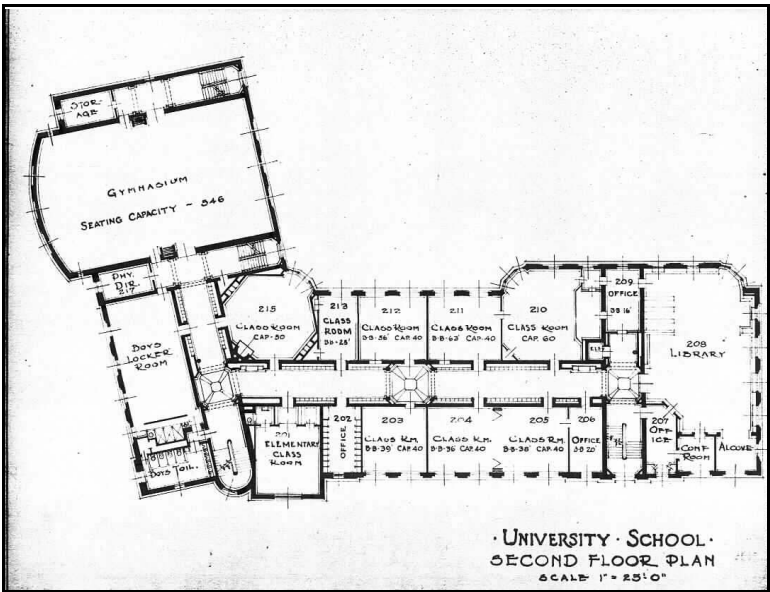
Bob's work in physical education has been somewhat of a problem. His interest in game situations is unpredictable, and he is frequently the center of disturbances. We hope that he will

recognize the importance of improving his participation in this area next year.

We have enjoyed working with Bob these past two years, and we shall continued to be interested in his successes in the years ahead.

Sincerely yours,  
Mary Jane Loomis  
Sixth Grade Teacher

# The Middle School



University School Floor Plan, Second Floor: OSU Archives

## Faculty and Facilities

Grade	Room	Teacher	Class Size	Year
7	210	Katherine Jones	31	1949-50
8	—			
9	203-204	Adrian Stilson - Robert Boyd	36	1950-51





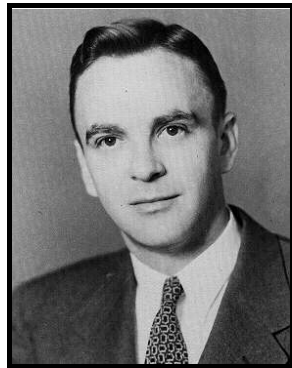
## Middle School Grades

# A Brief Overview of Core

By Paul Klohr  
Director, University School  
1950-1957

The philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of the elementary school years were extended into the middle school and then on into the senior high. Beginning in Grade 7, Bob's class experienced an organized democratic decision making environment that would involve students in a broad range of group discussion and selection activities. At the heart of the school's experimental learning environment in the upper grades was a complex amalgam of subject areas and democratic challenges known as *core*.

From a student's perspective, core had many similarities to their elementary school classroom – at least to the degree that a single teacher was responsible for instruction across multiple subject



Paul Klohr  
Photo: OSU Archives

areas. In the middle school grades, core comprised half of the day. But, unlike their elementary school experiences, students in core discovered a far more focused democratic decision-making process that included, for the first time, substantial research activities on the part of students. Where elementary grade teachers were supportive of a student's personal development, the core teachers in the upper school were counselors whose job it was to direct, support, and report on a student's academic progress.

The counselor activities of core teachers were essential given the wide spread academic disciplines included in core. For no matter how experimental the school, or the success or failure of experimental programs or methods, the school's job was to produce graduates as well, or better prepared, than those from public schools.

In many ways, University School's core system was equivalent to the *general education* component of a school's curriculum. But, so was it a democracy laboratory, home room, and reading-writing center. In the professional world of educational theory, there was great concern that schools and colleges should improve their role in advancing *general education*. Harvard's president, James Conant was a leader in this movement. Core was University School's effort. Core cut across the traditional fields – English, history, science, arts and music. So it was also the center of the school's ongoing attention and assessment of student progress and guidance.

### **Core in Action**

Each quarter, core students chose a subject for study. This effort included suggestions from students and, more importantly, research efforts on the part of supporters of each subject to determine the availability of suitable resources in the school library, on campus, or in the community. There were no prescribed books for any subject field, nor were there any curriculum guides to help in the selection of appropriate learning experiences for any grade level.

Subject selection was one of several core related student activities that fulfilled one or more of the schools philosophical requirements. Subject selection was an activity that would be repeated every quarter as the student progressed through the school. Students were faced with a very practical democracy in-action project – as well as a continuing lesson in problem identification, resource availability assessment and goal setting.

Given this complex set of responsibilities, how did it all start autumn quarter the year Bob entered the seventh grade? There were no rules and regulations regarding how a seventh grade core teacher would engage the class in selecting a core topic for study. Each teacher's approach reflected their own personality and *classroom style* of relating to students as well as their own interpretation of the school's undergirding philosophy and theory.

Katherine Jones, Bob's seventh grade Core Counselor, was experienced in subject selection activities, so here's about how I feel she would have approached the problem with her class of fifteen girls and sixteen boys.

"I need your help in deciding what we should do these days as we work together on our own core study. We need to take time to think about and explore several different possibilities. All of you, even those of you coming in new, have had some work you especially liked. Try to think about this as we plan. I will list on the board, to help in our discussion and planning, some of the things that I think are important."

### **Criteria Development**

At that point, I suspect Mrs. Jones would have developed a list of criteria to help focus the class on subjects suitable for investigation:

1. Big enough to keep us interested and working together for the quarter.
2. A topic that will give us enough material to read and explore in our library books

and the text books and other materials in the different classes we are taking.

3. A study big enough to give us ideas to explore and write about, or to sing or act out.

There would have been other criteria Mrs. Jones probably considered based on her knowledge of her student's capabilities and previous academic achievements. Her own criteria might well have served to begin the selection process that later involved the direct participation of students. In any event, core teachers carefully avoided trying to dominate the selection of studies to assure that the group decision making aspects of core remained central to the learning experience.

It is important to note that the process was not hurried. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, it might well have taken as much as a month or more. As the process developed, students generated a list of possible core studies. These individual suggestions were later grouped around larger topics, often more comprehensive in nature, and more likely to have broader and deeper general education learning outcomes.

At this stage of planning, there may have been as many as five topics under more generalized headings such as:

My Pets  
Ohio-Our State  
Countries of the World  
What I want to Be  
Living in Columbus

What followed were efforts on the part of the teacher to explore the extent of effort and risks of each potential subject area. Help would come in this process by way of inviting the school librarian to advise the class on what books and other materials might be found in each subject under consideration. Sometimes, faculty members teaching history, math, science or the arts might

be invited to discuss what their areas of study might offer to some or all of the potential choices.

Finally, after a lengthy period of research and discussion that typically involved students in writing and speaking about their own choices, Katherine Jones might offer her own insight into what might be included in each possible area of study. Finally, the class would vote on which alternative seemed the most interesting and promising in terms of the criteria used in the selection process.

### **Working Environment**

Bob's class chose *Living in Columbus* as their first core study unit. In embarking on their studies, members of Bob's class joined one of several committees made up of students to pursue some aspects of the topic selected. However, in addition to his committee work, each student was to pursue some individual interest in the chosen topic. As a consequence, the written and oral work of each group was accompanied by individual research and reporting throughout the quarter. There was also a final report based on what the individual student had learned.

An assessment of these individual reports, plus the judgement of the teacher about the overall academic performance of each student provided the basis of the core teacher's quarterly progress report. All such evaluations were recorded in a vertical file that traced the student's academic achievements and problems throughout their career at University School.

In light of the school's philosophy, it seemed clear that no single number of letter grade could be used as an accurate representation of a student's progress in core due to the depth and complexity of the intertwined subject areas and the spurt and plateau pattern endemic to learning.

Bob's recounting of his own broad engagement and extra-curricular research activities provides plentiful evidence of how the depth and breadth common to core studies defied traditional notions of grade level and *test specific* assessment of academic achievement.



## Grade Seven



Elementary Physics Class  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1949-1950*

**T**he new house, at 503 Kelton Avenue, was on the corner of Mound Street. The house was old, having been built in 1905. Compared to our small apartment, also very large. The kitchen was so big that it had it's own entrance, a bathroom of its own, and an immense cupboard area. In addition to the kitchen, the downstairs included a sitting room and a parlor room with a picture window overlooking Kelton Avenue. On the second floor were three bedrooms. A large bath and a sewing room. There was also a small room on the third floor that I would later use as a quiet place to study.

### **New Occasions Teach New Duties**

For me, getting acquainted was easy. All I had to do was go outside and kids near my age found me. All of them seemed much older than the playmates I left behind, but nearly all of them were newspaper carriers. They all wanted to know if I wanted a paper route. I didn't, thinking that was something I could do later in the summer, but they insisted I come to the Citizen's distribution station that very afternoon. "It's just over there," they told me, pointing toward a small unheated building, visible from our house, "just across Mound Street."

There I met the station manager, Red Ballmer, who was no more than six years older than me. He was a gregarious redheaded young man who lived only a few houses away. He was also one of those people who could have fun, or make fun, of doing most anything. He would become my manager, and eventually a good friend as well. Even my parents liked Red Ballmer, so soon I was back carrying the *Columbus Citizen*. My route was far from the station house. It began on Miller Avenue at Oak Street – right next



By the beginning of the 1949-50 school year, trolley busses replaced streetcars on High St.

Photo: Columbus Metropolitan Library.



to the old streetcar barns where Oak Street begins a long hill leading down to the Alum creek basin. Although the route only had about 52 subscribers, the route covered all the streets between Oak and Broad Street from Miller to Fairwood. Fortunately the route included all of Franklin Park, although there were no customers north of Franklin Park South.

Given my previous two years experiences carrying all of the Columbus papers at one time or another, I was soon the leader of the carriers in my new neighborhood. I enjoyed the power of being something of a real boss, made all the more fun when Red Ballmer promoted me, in name only, to be his assistant station manager. With something of an official position, I became increasingly officious as well. This did not set well with my many new friends in the neighborhood, and very much to my surprise, three of them jumped me one afternoon and left me with a bloody nose. We all laughed afterwards, but I had learned an important lesson. If I were going to follow my natural inclination to take charge and guide all activities toward my own benefit or needs, I needed to apply some of what University School had taught me about consensus and working *with* people.

That summer I also spent two weeks in Canton – but by then Jay and his friends were into high school which left me out of most everything outside of family gatherings and activities. Fortunately, the science fiction program I liked was still on WCMW, and all of my favorite magazines were still on the rack at Bachelor's drug store. I tried to tell everyone about television, but few knew anything about it.

When school began in late September, I had to leave home about 7:30 in the morning. Although I only had to walk one short block to the Main Street bus line, the trip downtown, where I transferred to the familiar North High Street route in front of the State house, took most of an hour. I didn't like the trip, and missed the old neighborhood, but school activities soon had me back in full stride.

Our seventh grade teacher was Katherine Jones, a friendly middle-aged woman with a soft disposition masking a mind sharp as a Samurai. We tangled almost immediately, for Mrs. Jones had little of the nurturing patience had I come to expect from Miss Loomis. We also had several new students in our class, one of whom was a beautiful sandy haired daughter of one of Columbus' senior police officials. She wore makeup to school on her first day, and as if someone had turned on a light, in the days that followed nearly every girl in the class did so as well.

By fall, Mrs. Jones had me well in tow. When I was intemperate, demanding or outright troublesome, she not only corrected me, but she also encouraged me by way of finding some way to relate the activity I was avoiding to one of my many growing interests. Although her methods and means were different from the unflappable Miss Loomis who we had all grown to love, Katherine Jones had her own ways of redirecting her students own interests and abilities toward mastering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. By the time cold weather set in, Katherine Jones had me, and most everyone else in our class, well in hand.

### **Old Sparky**

Our study unit autumn quarter was about Columbus. I was not at all interested, and did little to apply myself. Our assignment was to discover interesting things about our city and report our findings to the class. What I found in the library was of little interest to me, I wanted to engage in real research – to locate and report on things my classmates would never think about. One day I went down to the school office to use the telephone. I had an idea of something that would get me a great deal of attention – if not notoriety. I looked up the telephone number of the warden at the Ohio State Penitentiary. When his secretary answered I explained that I was doing research on the electric chair and that I wanted to come downtown to see it. Before long I had an appointment with the warden of Ohio's only maximum security prison.



Ohio State Penitentiary circa 1950.

Photo: Ohio Historical Society

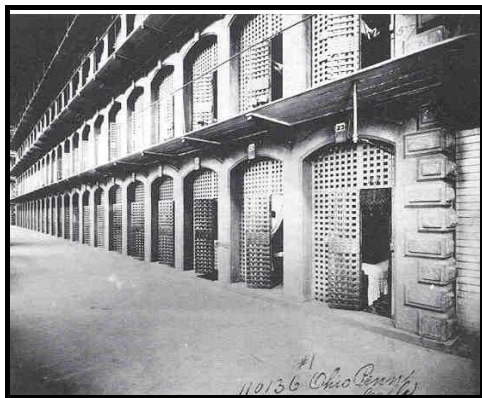
When I told Mrs. Jones she was not enthusiastic. Neither the subject nor the place was appropriate to the purpose of our study unit, but she wisely decided to give me enough rope to hang myself. A few days later, I arrived at the prison with full knowledge that I was getting away with something that would greatly impress my classmates. I had to wait in the visitor center until the warden's male secretary came to admit me into the murky old prison. Ralph Alvis, who had become warden in 1948, was a stocky rough-hewn man. One look at him gave me second thoughts about my scheme to get into the Death House.

When I found out it would be the warden himself, who would show me the electric chair my heart sunk. It needn't have, for Warden Alvis was the penultimate power figure in his prison and being with him went a long way toward assuring my safety.

With little more than *hello* and a firm handshake, Alvis motioned toward the door.

“Don’t wonder off son,” he admonished me, “For your own safety stay as close to me as possible.” Moments later, we were outside his office and crossing into the East Hall where we would descend into the bowels of the most horrible place I had ever seen. Once inside the ancient East Hall, the warden escorted me between the tiers of dingy cell blocks lining the East Hall. The stench and the noise were horrible, and had I known what those men would have done to a young boy, I would never have considered going inside that insidious hell-hole. I remember looking up at three or more levels of cells along each side of us. Just hearing the jeering sounds of the inmates when they saw who the warden had brought into their prison was enough to curdle my blood. If it was Ralph Alvis’ intention to scare me that day, he succeeded.

I suspect that if warden Alvis had enquired about whether I wanted to continue as we briskly walked down the East Hall I might well have opted to leave. But, he didn’t – and I stayed as close to him as possible. In other circumstances I would have been

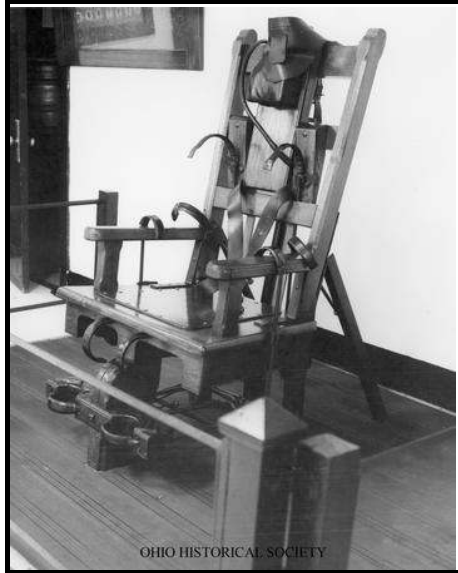


The East Hall – Ohio Penitentiary  
Photo: Courtesy The Big House

thrilled at the attention I garnered by being the guest of the warden, but on this day I remained quiet and did what I was told. Finally, when we reached the death house, one of the guards unlocked the door and let us inside. The interior was dark and forbidding. Alvis turned on the lights and pointed the way to the execution room.

As we entered the room, Warden Alvis said, absent any hint of a smile, “Well son, . . . here’s old Sparky. Do you want to sit in it?”

Seeing the electric chair that day hit me like a hard punch to the solar plexus. All of my bravado deserted me as I studied the rickety old contraption. It was all I could do not to turn and run. But there was nowhere to go. I remember standing in front of that ugly thing all but speechless while Warden Alvis stepped



Ohio's Electric Chair

Photo Courtesy Ohio Historical Society

onto the platform and began to explain how the chair worked. I listened as he explained how the inmate was strapped in; how the head was shaved, and why the arms had to be strapped down to keep them from flying about as each of three 2100 volt charges were administered at regular intervals. By the time he explained that nearly three hundred people had already died in that chair, I was far too overwhelmed to speak.

When I had seen enough, Alvis lead me outside the old Death House, along the Catholic Chapel building, then across the open yard to the entrance to the West Hall. There we re-entered the cellblocks with the noise of slamming steel and chattering men. By the time we returned to the administrative complex, Bobby Butche had more than enough. Although I wrote a colorful report on my adventure, and gave a dramatic verbal report to the class, my visit to Ohio Penitentiary haunted me for many weeks.

### **Pivotal Year**

For me, the seventh grade would prove to be the most significant year of my life. Although Katherine Jones was giving me a long leash in pursuit of my interests, so much in my life had changed that I was struggling. There I was, part child and part adult – and often as not, unsure which. I knew I had gone too far with the electric chair research, but Katherine Jones may well have known that the experience would mature me. To my credit, I made my seventh grade adventures learning experiences. But maturity of judgement, and attaining anything close to an adult sense of propriety, would take me many more years to develop.

No matter my many mistakes, and Katherine Jones' seemingly limitless patience with my faltering efforts to grow-up, my experiences that year were pivotal in my pubescent battle to discover who I was and what I wanted in my life. Fortunately, all of my adventures were not as foolish as wanting to sit in the electric chair, which I never even came close to doing. But along the way, the kind of adult attention I longed for began to materialize as my determination, unbounded energy, intellect and maturing mind took me to places and put me with people who helped to guide my ship of discovery.

### **Henry Koontz – First Mentor**

In an effort to get me engaged, Mrs. Jones pulled me aside one morning and enquired about my lagging interest in our Columbus studies. My problem was one of engagement – and reading was no match for a kid willing to risk life and limb in a prison. Perhaps knowing I would do better doing research outside the library, Katherine Jones posed an interesting idea. “Why don’t you go down to City Hall and report on how city government operates?”

I accepted the challenge, and told my parents about my plans to go down to the Mayor’s office to look around. Although my dad was not very interested in my plans, during dinner that evening Mom told me about how she had worked in the Mayor’s

office before she married. “But that’s not where the action is,” she told me, “The fights and arguments are in City Council.”

The next Monday night, after dinner, I took the Main Street bus back downtown and arrived at City Hall before the City Council meeting at 6:30. I remember hanging around in the hallway outside council chambers, certain the adults would either not let me in or run me out when they found I was there. Neither happened, of course, so I sat in the front row while all manner of people came and left. After a while I realized that what was going on was politics – and that some of the people up on the dias were Democrats like me.

Not only was I treated well, but the adults let me in any of the committee meeting rooms where bonding, budgeting and zoning activities were being discussed. I watched that first night, but I understood little of what was going on. The next day Mrs. Jones enquired about what I had seen. When I gave her a vague description she was not pleased and demanded that I write her a report about what had happened.

The next week I was back again. And the week after that. I don’t remember today what was going on in City Council that so fascinated me, but little Bobby Butche became a regular fixture at meetings. Soon I was able to capture the attention of many



Columbus City Hall  
Council Entrance  
Photo: City of Columbus

adults, engage them, entertain them, question them and act just like I was one of them. Every week or so I wrote another paper about what I was doing and what was happening *downtown*.

Eventually, I came to know the Council members by their names. Dr. O. J. Fillinger was not much taken by me, but the president of council that year, Joseph Jones spoke to me and answered questions as if I were an adult. That really turned me on, for not only did I have the attention of important adults, they treated me as if I were someone important. Mr. Jones was from the north end and lived on Crestview Rd. Frank Kerns also lived north.

One night I met Henry A Koontz, who was from the Hilltop area on the west side. He was tall and lanky, had a soft quiet voice, and, let's just say he was a bit of a talker. When I asked him questions he would sometimes speak at great length – filling me with information and new questions. He was well into his sixties by then, but he was very tolerant of someone my age – and fascinated that I had made myself a regular at their Monday night meetings. I also met councilman Oestreicher who lived on east Main Street. The mayor that year, someone with little interest in or tolerance of kids, was James Rhodes. Councilman Walter Snider was from the south end, and as I recall, he was distant and unapproachable. The other councilman that year was Dr. Daniel Whitacre.

All of the councilmen were male then, but their clerk, Agnes Brown Cain, was grand-motherly in appearance, highly opinionated, officious and sometimes cantankerous. I learned to steer clear of her in the first few weeks.

By November, Henry A. Koontz and I had become best friends and I wrote about him often in my reports. One night he told me that Robert Oestreicher was going to run for Mayor. I remember laughing at the idea of a Republican becoming Mayor. Henry Koontz laughed heartily – then told me that not only was the current Mayor, Jim Rhodes, a Republican, so was Henry Koontz. In the kind of logic that only makes sense when one is thirteen, I



foolishly assumed that anyone I liked would automatically be a Democrat.

I had a great deal to learn about people and why people chose to identify themselves as Democrats or Republicans.

### **Friday Night Wrestling**

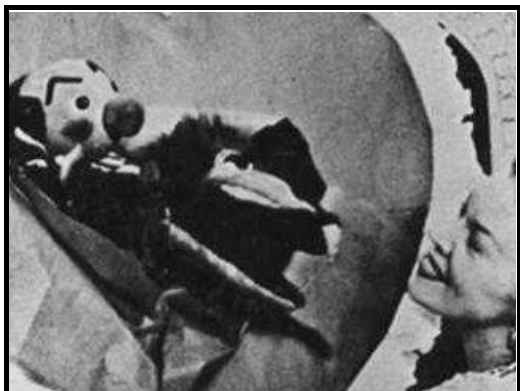
That fall mom talked dad into buying our first television set. He made the purchase from a lodge brother who had a new appliance store nearby. Our first TV was a 16 inch RCA table model. When it came home we reorganized the house. The TV was set-up on a table in the living room of the house on Kelton Avenue. To be nearer the TV, I moved from the small bedroom on the second floor to the downstairs parlor area at the front of the house. A long curtain rod was erected across the opening between the two rooms. My new bedroom looked out on Kelton, and had its own entrance from the front porch. The room was at least twice as large as the one upstairs so there was space for my school books and study materials.



This RCA TV revealed a world beyond my imagination.

Photo: TV History

When I got home from school, I would impatiently wait for five o'clock when the only station in town broadcasting afternoon programs signed on. Then, thanks to the coaxial cable from New York, WLW-C would take down its test pattern and *Sky King*, a very low budget serial for kids would begin. I watched every episode in sheer fascina-



Kukla Fran and Ollie, ca 1950

Photo: NBC4

tion and amazement. Mom would stay in the kitchen where she was preparing dinner until the next program came on. When she heard the song that began each Kukla Fran and Ollie program, she would come in to watch it with me.

Television became a marvelous distraction from the very beginning – enough to interfere with my studies and those of millions of school children who followed. Although I had begun to develop some home study habits in Miss Loomis' sixth grade, television became my nemesis.

Few people had TVs that fall, so many of dad's family and friends would come to our house to see shows. Sometimes we had to move extra chairs into the downstairs sitting room to accommodate the crowd. The most popular show that year was Friday Night Wrestling from Cincinnati. Not only did the TV amuse us, it consumed so much time that family arguments among my dad's siblings all but disappeared. Between my paper route and our new television set, my time for school activities was seriously diminished. Except for my outside research projects, my studies suffered that year.

Soon WBNS-TV was on the air as well. Bill Pepper, Chet Long, Joe Holbrook, Tom Gleba, Joe Hill and *The Wrangler* soon became our friends. In addition to CBS public affairs programs, the station originated public affairs programs from their new studios on Twin Rivers Drive.

### **Town Meeting**

One of WBNS-TV's many public affairs programs in the 1950s was *Columbus Town Meeting*, a one hour, community issues, discussion program broadcast at noon on Sundays. We began watching it at our house as soon as we had our first TV. The one hour program largely dealt with the political and civic issues that Henry Koontz would discuss with me after the many long Monday nights I spent at City Hall. Town Meeting ad-

ressed questions, telephoned in by viewers, to a panel of people who were involved in some newsworthy project or issue. A bank of telephones was set-up in the client room overlooking Studio-A where volunteers would write the questions on cards. From there, young people, would race down the stairs and discreetly deliver the question cards to the program moderator.

I became a regular viewer of *Columbus Town Meeting* and, once I became affiliated with WBNS-TV, I frequently watched it being broadcast. Town Meeting was produced by Julia Rains' grandmother, Grace Herr Frye and moderated by attorneys C. Emory Glander and Earl Morris.

### **Ask Frieda Heller**

Although I had frequently sought help from Frieda Heller concerning study resources, my interests in television eventually



Julia Rains with Columbus Town Meeting  
Producer, Grace Herr Frye, on the set.

Photo: WBNS-TV

sent me into her realm in search of books about television. I only found one, dealing with how television would be used for broadcasting football games, but with Miss Heller's assistance two others were found. One of them was about how Vladimir Zworykin had invented the cathode-ray tube and experimented with television at RCA in the early 1930s. I devoured the books and wanted more.

Before long the University School library had three more books about television, the growth of the coaxial cable and how television programs were staged and broadcast. I'm certain that other students similarly found the University School library responsive to their needs and interests. Frieda Heller earned her reputation as one of America's foremost librarians not just for library content, but equally for her ability to assist teachers and students in developing and applying library resources.

### **Ebenezer Hill**

On Thanksgiving morning, we all piled into the old Ford for our regular holiday dinner with my aunt and uncle in Canton. It was cold and blustery that morning, with gray clouds, but no rain. Dad chose the Rt. 3 route that morning and before long we passed through Westerville, Sunbury and Centerberg. Mom and dad were in the front seat talking as we made our way to Canton. I was in the back seat with the food mom had prepared for the dinner that afternoon.

By the time we reached Mount Vernon, it was nearly noon. There was little traffic in town so we were soon back on the highway. By the time we reached where Ohio Route 3 veers right, on the north side of Mt. Vernon, dad had fallen in behind another car – one even older than ours. Dad was never an aggressive driver, so we followed the other car for some distance. Soon we passed by the Loma-Linda plant and the little settlement at Academia. Moments later we began to roll down hill as we approached Sanatorium Road. Beyond the car in front of us, we could see the small bridges that crossed two small streams at the bottom of

Ebenezer Hill. Beyond us, on the other side, Rt. 3 climbed well over a hundred feet in altitude. By the time we passed the Sanatorium Road intersection, perhaps fifty feet behind the car in front of us, a flatbed truck appeared at the top of the hill ahead. From the moment I saw the truck, I sensed he was moving faster than we were. Although dad slowed down slightly, the oncoming truck sped up as it descended the long hill. In less than fifteen seconds, the car ahead of us would pass the oncoming truck on the second of the small bridges ahead.

Dad and mom were still talking as we crossed the first bridge. I remember to this day seeing the approaching truck begin to drift off the road and onto the right berm. I shouted something, but my parents were deeply involved in what they were saying and paid little attention. Fortunately for us, although dad was talking, he was also watching the oncoming truck. Then, all hell broke loose.

At the bottom of the hill, moving at high speed for those days, the truck struck the right abutment of the bridge, careened sideways, its flat bed skidding along the roadway across the full width of the pavement. With a gigantic smash, the flat bed collided with the car immediately in front of us. By then dad was on the brakes and pulling us off the right side of the roadway. The flatbed sliced off the top of the car in front of us, after which it skidded by us – missing us only by inches. In a rush of anguished noise and twisted metal, the truck, flat bed still attached, came to a screeching stop.

Dad told mom to run to the nearest farmhouse to report the accident. He also told me to stay inside while he got out to see if anyone was hurt, but I was already out the door. I remember dad recoiling when he discovered headless people still in the car we had been following. Then he heard me vomiting, not far away where I discovered two heads along the roadside looking right into my eyes. By then, mom was screaming at us. “Is anyone hurt? There’s no one at home here.”

“Better go down to the next farmhouse,” dad shouted back, “there’s bad trouble here.”

I tried not to see any more of the carnage, but dad asked me to go back to the car to get a blanket to help him cover the bodies. Moments later I helped him pull our old army blanket over the headless bodies. In my mind, I sensed their heads were watching us. On my way back to our car, I slipped on the brains strewn along the roadway. At that point, I broke down into uncontrollable sobbing.

“I’ll take care of them,” dad told me, “You better check the truck to see if the driver is in there. Sobbing and terrified, I approached the truck and pulled open the door on the driver’s side of the cab. Inside was a man, probably in his twenties, smiling at me. “Anybody hurt?” he asked as he steadied himself to get out of his truck. I could not answer.

Soon the highway patrol arrived on the scene along with an ambulance and a tow truck. I got into dad’s car and cried in anguish. When mom got back from calling for help, dad told her to get in the car and shut me up. She tried, but I was in a state of shock. Even so, as the shock consumed my consciousness, I went from screaming to being totally quiet.

Once the bodies were removed and the tow truck had dragged the flat bed off the highway, dad drove on to Canton. Mom and dad would long remember that I changed that day and that I had very little to say and found very little joy that Thanksgiving. What I had seen and heard was simply too awful to remember, let alone, talk about.

When I returned to school the next week I was quiet and withdrawn. I had no interest at all in school, and I was keeping my feelings inside. After a couple of days, Mrs. Jones learned about what had happened to us over the holiday. She confronted the issue head-on by asking me to write a report about what had happened. It took me many days to write the paper, but in the doing I was able to let out my feelings and deal with the horror I had witnessed. Unlike most other adults who would leave me alone with my

feelings or let me get by with inappropriate behavior, Katherine Jones made me behave and produce. Although I would have nightmares about that day for many years, Katherine Jones helped me deal with my feelings and my fears. By the time school began again in January, Mrs. Jones and I had come to know and to trust one another.

Just before Christmas, we received a certified letter from the Knox County Court of Common Pleas. The truck driver had been cited for failure to control his vehicle and charged with involuntary manslaughter. Since I had been the one who let him out of his truck, I was summoned by the prosecuting attorney to testify at the trial. At my age, the grueling examination and cross-examination were very disturbing. But, I was the only witness who tied the driver to the scene of the accident, so the case hung on my testimony. I relived that terrible day in my testimony over and over again. Finally, it was over and my parents drove me back to Columbus. On the outside I was placid and quiet, but inside, I remained very stressed and confused.

### **He'll Come Around**

When school began again in January our class chose a new study unit – but I was determined to continue my adventures at City Council. At the first Council meeting in January of 1950, Robert Oestreicher stepped down as Council President to focus on his forthcoming run for Mayor. I sat in the balcony that night as the council members congratulated one another on their re-election to council. Everyone I had come to know was back on the dias – and to my considerable surprise, and pleasure, the Council elected my friend Henry Koontz as their new president. When Mayor Rhodes came in to the chamber to congratulate Henry Koontz, I dashed downstairs to get in on the conversation. I was at Henry's side when Rhodes was ready to leave. The Mayor shook my hand vigorously, and while he had me by the hand, Rhodes enquired of Henry, "Have you made a Republican of this boy yet?"

"Not yet," Henry told the Mayor, "but he'll come around."

Although our seventh grade class went on to study about our human bodies, I continued to go to Council meetings and to follow the ebb and flow of power in the city. Sometimes the Council meetings would run late and I wouldn't be ready to leave until after regular bus service ended at midnight. When this happened Henry Koontz would insist on driving me up to High Street to catch the night owl. Sometimes, we would sit in his warm car at the bus stop waiting for the bus. Henry was a talker and a believer in his city, so it was not uncommon for him to tell me about how our town was changing and how it was one day going to become a very large and important city. Then, when the owl bus pulled up, I would leap out and head home.

Henry Koontz taught me a great deal about politics and what goes on behind the closed doors of city government. But, so did Henry Koontz provide an excellent role model. No matter my youthful exuberance, politics is not a child's game. In my innocent admiration for Harry Truman, I viewed political struggle in shades of black and white. It would be many more years before I would discover how politics facilitates the mechanics of democracy. Young Bobby had no inkling that one day he would become a Republican. Henry Koontz never knew, of course, but I suspect my change in political bearing would have been something for which he would have been very proud indeed. James Rhodes, who had no memory of the night we met at City Council, came to know me well when I became part of his political organization in the 1960's.

### **Screeching Metal**

My downstairs bedroom had many advantages. For one thing it was close to the TV meaning that sometimes I could watch TV after my parents had gone to bed for the night. I had a large National Geographic Society map of the world on the wall opposite my bed which I examined closely wondering if I would ever visit any of the exotic places depicted on the map. Certain that I would never see China or Australia, I affixed a similar map of the United States on the wall above my bed. Then, while I was studying, I



could dream of one day visiting some of the other time zones in my own country. Everything seemed so far away from our simple home at the corner of Mound and Kelton.

Mound Street was a major thoroughfare that paralleled Main Street, but without the commercial establishments or the traffic lights. The speed limit on Mound Street was 35 MPH, people often sped along at 50 and over. Although Kelton Avenue was a residential street, it had ‘through’ status which meant that the streets between Main and Livingston had to stop at Kelton. The exception was Mound Street – where our house was on the northwest corner and perhaps four feet above grade.

Not everyone coming down Kelton saw the stop sign, so there was frequent screeching of tires – especially in wee hours of the night. In the eighteen or so months we lived on the corner, the flood of new cars being bought by increasingly affluent Americans significantly increased the traffic on Mound Street.

One night, just after midnight, I was awakened by the sound of screeching tires. Then Bam! There was a collision that sent one of the cars up our embankment where it struck our house just behind my bed. I was terrified, not just for my own safety, but the incident brought back my memories of being run over on First Avenue, and the horrors of Ebenezer Hill. Soon the Emergency Squad was on the scene and someone was pounding on the door to my bedroom. When I opened the door there was a fireman holding a young woman who was bleeding profusely. He needed towels and while I went to get them, he put her on my bed to treat her wounds sufficiently to staunch the bleeding. When it was all over, she was transported to nearby St. Ann’s hospital and my bedroom and bed were a bloody mess.

From that night on, whenever I heard cars speeding along Mound Street at night, I wondered when there would be another crash – possibly one that would injure me.

### **Old Smokehouse**

By spring, our seventh grade study unit had changed to “Understanding Myself” which was largely aimed at helping us to understand the changes brought about by puberty. Although there were snippets of sex education involved, most of the study unit was aimed at how our bodies functioned, our nutritional needs, and hygiene. I found little in this study to be of interest, so I was appointed to the sub-committee on nutrition. I was not very enthusiastic about studying how apples came from trees, berries from bushes, and grain from distant fields.

When I proposed going to a meat packing plant to see how meat was made, Katherine Jones was not surprised. When I explained that our whole sub-committee of five students would go, she put a quick stop to it. Perhaps she knew what went on in a meat packing plant, or maybe she simply wanted our group to cover all kinds of foodstuffs, but the group visit was not appropriate. I could go on my own, if I liked, and report to the class. I accepted the challenge with about as much forethought as I had given the electric chair project. Soon I had an appointment later that week with the plant foreman at the David Davies meat packing plant on Jackson Pike.

I chose the David Davies plant from several meat packers in the Columbus area at that time mostly because it was the brand my mother favored. I was a big fan of Old Smokehouse branded products, especially their hot dogs. I had no idea of what went on in a packing house, nor had I ever heard the admonition that the two things in life one should never see being made were laws and sausages.

The plant foreman who showed me around his plant that morning wisely bypassed the bloody killing station where bovines are spiked and bled. After my experiences at Ebenezer Hill, seeing the kill would have been most upsetting. Not to suggest that what I did see that day was very pleasant, for I saw how the animals were skinned, limbs separated and heads removed. I remember wanting to leave and the increasingly sick feelings I developed as

the processing of live animals into meat took place before my very eyes. By the time we got to the carcass room, where sides of beef hang on long hooks – ready to be shipped to meat markets – I was becoming a bit queasy. At the end of the carcass room we went through double swinging doors into the packing room. There, all of the animal parts were being processed into a wide variety of meat products. As I watched people were cutting off animal parts and organs, and throwing them into large vessels. After grinding and mixing the finely ground materials were squeezed into casings, hung on tall racks and rolled into a huge smoking room. What came out of that room was Old Smokehouse Bologna and hot dogs. I couldn't believe my eyes, and when I left that morning I was certain I would never eat processed meats again. When I gave my report to the class, I sensed that most of them would never eat another hot dog either.

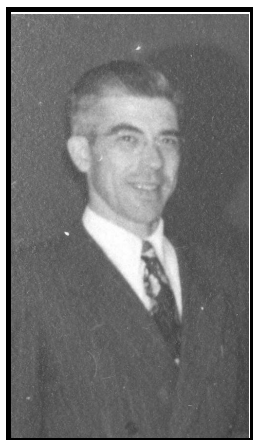
### **Numbers Game**

One of our new teachers that year was a former army officer, Adrian Henry Stilson. After returning from World War II, Adrian Stilson completed his MA degree at Ohio State the year before coming to our school. Stilson was assigned that year to teach mathematics in grades 7 and 8. His inexperience and background made him an unusual choice for the University School faculty. His view and his voice were fresh, for he was neither schooled in, or experienced, with University School's philosophy and curriculum. Stilson had an outgoing personality and was often charming. More to the point, he spoke with a smile, and he was infectiously enthusiastic about what he taught. Still, he remained very much a military officer, quick to make decisions, a stickler for the rules, and from time to time, inflexible with his students. These qualities made him somewhat suspect to some of his colleagues, but popular with his students.

Stilson's assignment that year was to teach us shortcuts to solving arithmetic problems, advance our knowledge of fractions, and provided our class its first taste of algebraic expression and

notation. I found the material interesting, and Adrian Stilson's teaching style engaging, but we soon developed an adversarial relationship. While I no doubt sometimes acted like, and may well have believed, that I was in some way in charge of the seventh grade, Major Stilson would have none of it. He was my first male teacher, and he saw to it that Robert Butche would learn how to be subordinate. I fought him repeatedly, and I always lost. He was more than tough enough to keep a wily, inexperienced seventh grader in line.

There had been few people in my life that I could not manipulate, negotiate, or otherwise get around – at least occasion-



Adrian H. Stilson  
Photo: OSU Archives

ally. What I needed, and did not have, was a strong father figure to teach me the ropes of male dominance and how one knew who was superior and who was subordinate. As a result, Adrian Stilson was on me constantly – and apparently with Katherine Jones' full approval. Although our class only had Stilson for one hour each day, he put me in my place and never wavered. Although he was very hard on me, he remained both open and very friendly. I wouldn't be the only member of our seventh grade class who would learn that Adrian Stilson could devastate you with a simple, firm No. And do so with an engaging smile.

I remember fighting this man for many weeks. Finally, I gave in and got on with his program. By spring, his seventh grade math class took up cartography as part of our study of graphs. Although I had become mildly interested in algebra, the precision and detail of cartography caught my attention. I was so excited about mapping science that one Sunday, after returning home from my east side paper route, I went out into

our Mound Street neighborhood and started to draw maps of the streets and alleys.

When I announced to Adrian Stilson that I wanted to make a map of the University School building and grounds, he was enthusiastic and supportive. I began to visit with him in his office to discuss what I had accomplished and to plan what remained to be done. Stilson was a avid photographer who often kept his personal Leica on his desk at school. When he suggested I might want to take some photographs to document my cartography project, he offered to let me use his camera.

I don't know when Adrian Stilson went from being my worst enemy to my best friend, but not only was my cartography project successful, I had become an enthusiastic student of photography as well. Although some others on the University School faculty were uncomfortable with Stilson's military bearing and attitudes, he was instrumental in teaching me life's most important lesson: Someone else is always in charge of some aspect of our lives, no matter how independent we may be.

Adrian Stilson helped me to grow-up that year. So did Katherine Jones. Together, their appraisal of my academic progress and my advancing maturity in many areas of my life, was about to start me on a new adventure. Bobby Butche was to have a second start.

### **Welcome to University School**

Up till this time, most of my friends were classmates, but that was to change when I met Bill McCormick in gym class. Although he was a grade ahead of me at that time, he was among the new students who came to University School that year. Although Bill had an outgoing personality, he was quiet – and often alone. He had come from Worthington largely because his older brother, Jim, was at University. Perhaps insecure in his new school setting, Bill waited for others to approach him. I was drawn to him immediately. “Welcome to University School,” I told Bill.

After I introduced myself, Bill says that I offered to help him get acclimated in his new school.

Although we were not classmates that year, we spent time together – and often walked across campus to the Natatorium for our swimming classes. We spoke of our lives and our dreams – and I showed him around school and the sprawling university. By the end of the school year, I had my first school friend outside of my own class. I had no way of knowing that events yet to unfold would make Bill and me best friends and that our relationship would continue all of our lives.

## Seventh Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Katherine Jones,  
December 21, 1949*

The present seventh grade at University School consists of thirty-one students; fifteen girls and sixteen boys. On the whole, the group is quite an enthusiastic and cooperative one. I have been particularly impressed by the ability of the members of this class to get along well with each other and to work together harmoniously on class projects. Contributing ideas without recognition and talking privately to classmates are habits many of the students need to learn to control in the interest of more effective learning during discussion and instruction periods.

The class is now working on the unit Living in Columbus. In pursuing this unit, we are relying heavily upon community resources as learning materials and are not emphasizing individual research as much as we will on some of the later units. In the process of arranging for trips, speakers, interviews, and the like, I have felt that most members of the class have shown some gains in ability to plan and organize their programs and its content. In addition to the unit work described, the class has been carrying on a reading and writing program which will be treated more specifically later in this report. Also, through class business meetings and the committee system, the members of the group are becoming familiar with parliamentary procedure and are participating in upper school projects.

Bob has made satisfactory progress in core the fall quarter. He has been interested in class projects and has worked hard for their success. On the whole, he gets along well with classmates, but

on some occasions he is a trifle condescending in his relations with them. He has been most pleasant and cooperative in his dealings with me.

Bob is an interested participant in our discussions, and he does a mature and able job on panel and committee reports. The quality of Bob's work indicates satisfactory understanding of the material with which we have dealt, but his lack of promptness in completing assignments is a weakness he needs to work on.

Bob's stories have been interesting and well organized, but he needs to make them more colorful, and he needs to reduce the number of mechanical errors made in them. His record on weekly spelling lessons has been only fair. According to the results of the reading test given this fall, his reading ability is above the average for beginning seventh graders. He has read the number of books agreed upon for the quarter.

All seventh grade pupils will have physical examinations by Dr. Shaffer this year. Dr. Shaffer and Mrs. Pugh report that Bob weighs 165 pounds and is 66  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches tall this fall. This is a very satisfactory gain of 25 pounds and of 3  $\frac{7}{8}$  inches in the past year.

### Mathematics - Mr. Stilson

In mathematics class, we began the year with a general review of the fundamental operations of arithmetic, namely addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers. Following this review, we developed the concept of fractions, beginning with common fractions, proceeding with decimal fractions, and ending with percentage. At the present time, we are investigating taxation. In addition to the mathematical operations involved in studying taxation, we are learning the reasons for paying taxes, the services that taxes buy, and the different kinds of taxes.

Bob could be a successful student in mathematics. He follows class discussion reasonably well and cooperates enthusiastically in the class work. However, he occasionally exhibits a tendency to be officious in his relations with his fellow students



and this is at times resented by some. He is somewhat inconsistent in his written work, and his success would be enhanced if he were more prompt and more complete in this phase of his work.

Related Arts - Miss Orr

Bob has been very conscientious about his work in the arts and has made outstanding progress in the field of painting. He has shown a very mature attitude in his desire to understand the meaning of visual expression, and his own attempts have developed from gray, lifeless pictures to a very expressive abstraction which translated music into color. Bob seems to be eager to work with new materials and processes and is very receptive to suggestion which is offered to help him in this respect. We are very pleased with Bob's progress but would like to suggest that he might enjoy his work still more if he could enter a bit more freely into some of the lighthearted fun of his classmates.

Physical Education - Mr. Billett

Bob needs a lot of individual instruction in the fundamentals of sports. He has a splendid attitude toward learning but lacks the fine coordination necessary in physical education. He is liked by the other boys and could be a leader if he could master the fundamentals.

The seventh grade staff wishes you a happy holiday.

Sincerely yours,  
Seventh Grade Staff  
Katherine Jones

## Winter Quarter

*Katherine Jones,  
March 22, 1950*

Recently I received evaluations from all of Bob's teachers and I wish to inform you that we feel satisfactory progress has been made in all of his studies during the winter quarter.

The next report to you is scheduled for the middle of May. At that time a statement from each of Bob's teachers will be forwarded to you.

If you wish further information at this time, will you please notify our office so that a conference may be planned in the near future.

Sincerely yours,  
Katherine E. Jones  
Seventh Grade Counselor

## Spring Quarter

*Katherine Jones,  
May 26, 1950*

During the latter part of the winter quarter and throughout the spring, the seventh grade class in core has worked on a health unit, Understanding Myself. To date, the group has worked on such topics as child growth and development, reproduction, the development and care of bones and muscles, and the way the circulation of blood serves our bodies. A probable following topic will be the way a balanced diet helps maintain good health. This unit has provided opportunity for a variety of activities – reading, written reports, speakers, movies, participation in the school baby clinic, dramatic skits, and illustrative drawings.

One of the highlights of the spring quarter for the class has been its Aloha party. In evaluating this party, the members of the staff who worked with the class on it expressed the feeling that the group did a superior job in carrying out effective plans. The students also seemed to feel that the party has been a “huge success” and that, on the whole, the members of the class had worked well together.

Bob has made quite satisfactory progress in core during the spring quarter. The improvement in his academic work has been gratifying. His unit reports have been completed promptly, and they have been of good quality. He has been an active participant in discussions, and his contributions usually have added to the understanding of the group.

The story series Bob has been writing has been marked by careful plotting and realistic dialogue. He has cut down considerably the number of mechanical errors in his stories. Also, his record on weekly spelling lessons has been very good. Bob had

made gains in reading comprehension, although his reading rate remains the same as in the fall. He has read more than the number of books agreed up for the quarter.

Bob has continued to show an interest in class projects. In working on them, however, he needs to try constantly to be tactful and democratic in his dealings with his fellow workers, if he is to be the effective leader he is capable of becoming.

### Mathematics - Mr. Stilson

Inasmuch as one of the objectives for the year was to explore various areas in mathematics, the class has had experiences leading in many different directions. During the autumn quarter, skills in the fundamental operations – addition, subtraction, multiplication and division – were developed and fractions – common, decimal, and percentages – were investigated. The specific application of these processes included such diverse and yet commonplace vehicles as buying and sell, mater-reading, banking, wages and salaries, and games.

The work of winter quarter stressed the introduction of basic concepts in algebra and geometry. These experiences included the formulation and solution of simple, linear equations, the meaning and use of power and roots, the recognition and appreciation of common geometric figures, such as, the triangle, square, circle, and trapezoid, the use of the compass and straight-edge in geometric construction, and the computation of areas of plan figures.

The first part of the spring quarter was utilized learning about graphs. The bar graph, the line graph, the circle graph, and the pictograph were examined, constructed and analyzed. At the present time, the group is divided into committees and is working on a class project which is based on the University School and which involves many of the skills learned during the year.

Bob has made satisfactory progress in mathematics this year. His written work is neat and generally accurate although he is not always prompt in meeting deadlines. His command of the various skills and his understanding of the different processes involved in the work of the year are adequate.

As his portion of the group project, Bob is preparing, from his own measurements, a scale drawing of the school grounds. He seems to enjoy his work and is trying hard to do a good job.

Because of Bob's cooperative spirit and intellectual curiosity, it has been a pleasure to work with him this year.

#### Related Arts – Miss Orr

Bob has continued to work with a great deal of enthusiasm and imagination in regard to his individual projects, but his contributions to group situations has become increasingly inconsistent. One of Bob's greatest difficulties has been in knowing when he has gained the greatest value from an idea and when it is time to stop. Perhaps this attitude has also kept him from realizing that while a little bit of socializing during class time is a good thing, an overemphasis is harmful to his own progress and quite disrupting to the group as a whole. We have, of course, been pleased to see that Bob is making an effort to meet people on their level of interest, but it is disappointing to see him making such an immature approach to the problem.

#### Music – Miss Tolbert

Seventh graders have been in the junior high music elective class which meets two hours each week. This class has enjoyed a variety of music experiences during the year. While their principal interest has been singing, they have also listened to many recordings, discussed current radio programs, concerts, musical

show, and the artists who have come to Columbus. They participated in planning and producing the Christmas program. Because of their interest in the presentation of the Desert Song, they have also become interested in learning more about other musical shows which have come to Columbus this year.

Many saw “Brigadoon” at the Hartman. Our discoveries of this lead into a study of Scotch songs, dances, and instruments, and how they contrast with music of the other British Isle countries.

The boys and girls have been keenly interested in how their voices change during this adolescent age. They have asked many questions about the changes and differences in their voices during this period. Believing that all junior high school boys and girls have this same problem, the group decided to solve some of the own questions concerning this point, and then to make a recording which might be useful as an explanation of this problem to other students. They are working toward the completion of this project now.

For the first time, this group has had enough boys and girls singing different voice parts to read through an interesting variety of choral literature for junior high school. As a group they have worked most cooperatively with each other, and with a student teacher, as well as the regular staff. It has been a pleasure to work with this group and to observe their individual progress.

Sincerely Yours,  
Katherine Jones,  
SEVENTH GRADE COUNSELOR

## Special Report

*Katherine Jones,  
June 21, 1950*

*Two weeks after the end of the 1949-50 school year.*

The other members of the seventh grade faculty and I are very happy to report we feel that Bob should be able to handle ninth grade work adequately next year.

Bob has worked hard to improve his reading and writing skills this year, and he has made substantial progress. In mathematics, his progress has not been comparable to that in other areas. He therefore, will need to make special effort in mathematics next year.

Although Bob's approach to a great many matters is more mature than that of the average seventh grade student, he does have tendencies in some situations to let his emotions dominate his behavior. Also, on some recent occasions, he has not been co-operative with some of his teachers.

We feel that he will need to guard against tendencies such as those mentioned above which do not make for good human relations.

We wish Bob a happy and successful year in the ninth grade.

Sincerely yours,  
Katherine E. Jones  
Seventh Grade Counselor  
The University School





## Grade Nine



The Engine Shop  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1950-51*

The summer of 1950 was in some ways stimulating and yet traumatic. Although I was thrilled to learn that I had been promoted into the ninth grade, I was uneasy that our family was about to move again. In a little over a year I had made new friends, and significantly expanded my influence on the east side. I grew my paper route, and had become a close confidant of our station manager, Red Ballmer.

Red had the personality and leadership qualities to make his district a success. He was immensely funny and hard working. Everybody loved being around Red because he made us his audience. Unfortunately, Red's joyful living of life sometimes got in the way of his goals.

My arrival in his Columbus Citizen distribution station brought something new. Like Red, I was easy going on the outside,

but inside I was highly competitive — and not at all afraid to make the hard decisions or demand compliance from people who had made commitments to Red. As a result, I brought a semblance of business and financial discipline that helped Red run a far tighter ship. By the summer of 1950 I was managing the weekly collections from carriers, wrapping the money for bank deposit, and taking it to the nearby Ohio National Bank at Miller and Main. When I returned from the bank, I gave Red the week's receipts in neat \$100 bills ready to settle his account with the circulation office. In the 1950's, when most Americans earned well under one hundred dollars a week, a \$100 bill created a great deal of attention. A separate envelope contained his commission for the week, counted and ready to spend. I liked the feel of power that I had garnered, and the growing trust I had earned from others — things I had not before accomplished. I would have stayed on Kelton Avenue permanently, if I had my way.

George and Gretchen Butche wanted their piece of the great American dream: A home of their own in the burgeoning suburbs. They were inspired by the economic engine that was transforming American from a land of war shortages to a consumer driven economy. It was their turn. They had waited fourteen years and scrimped and saved for their piece of the great American pie.

Even before we moved from First Avenue, dad would pack us into the old Ford and take Sunday drives into the desirable suburban neighborhoods where so many of our apartment neighbors were moving. Eventually they began to look at new homes being built in the north end. The more they looked the more my parents were discouraged. Most new homes were priced well above their means, and those that were not failed to meet mom's minimum qualifications.

After we moved to the east side, the Sunday house-hunting drives to the north side of town came to an end. My parents had decided to find a suitable lot where they would build their own home. They were in over their heads both practically and financially — absent knowledge of how to go about building a house, or



552 Wetmore Road  
Our 4 Room - 833 Sq foot dream house  
Photo: Franklin County Auditor

where to get the money to finance the project. The major problem was income. Mom was no longer working, and although the AFL-CIO had once again struck the Timken company, and dad was making considerably more money, the dream of a new home seemed little more than a dream.

One day they looked at a lot in the far north end, on Wetmore Road. It was in an area where there was no street, no other houses, and the remnants of a large tree stump at the rear. It was the least desirable lot, so the price was \$600. The adjoining lots were priced at \$800. Dad and mom sweated for two or three weeks trying to make a decision. They wanted the lot, but lacked the self-confidence to commit to realizing their dream.

I suggested that they make an offer on the lot, but while doing so was sound business, my parents would have been humiliated by offering less than the asking price. Finally, dad

agreed to buy the property. When it was paid for, most of what my parents had saved was already spent. By the time they applied for a \$6000 home loan at First Federal Savings and Loan, they underestimated what they would need by nearly \$2000.

When the house plans were approved, the 833 square foot house was projected to cost about \$8000. Not knowing how to solve the problem, they went hat in hand to my dad's brother-in-law to borrow the difference as a second mortgage. To their considerable credit, they made it all come together, and their new home was finally finished in the Spring of 1950.

To buy the house, my parents agreed to more than a little sweat equity. Before we could move in, we had to finish the hardwood floors, paint the walls and ceilings, clear the grounds of construction materials, grade and seed the lawns, and build the sidewalks to the street. When that was done dad and I would remove the tree stump and build a garage at the rear of the property.

### **A Home of Our Own**

Finally, in June, one of my dad's friends, Robert McDonald, and my Uncle Bill, helped us to move into the new home at 552 Wetmore Road. I was thrilled at the new house, but not at all happy to leave what I had built on the east side. I helped finish the floors, move mounds of earth, dig walkways and grade the lawn. I had gone from aspiring businessman to slave that year and I was not happy.

Our house was on an unpaved section of the street. To the east of us was a swamp. It was nearly impossible to travel the unfinished roadbed beyond our house. There wasn't a house in sight.

So my summer would be spent building the lawn, spreading KemTone on the walls, and moving large amounts of topsoil by wheelbarrow. My income had stopped, my workload had dramatically increased, and I felt very much abused. I had little understanding of the emotional and financial load on my parents, so I



Our first photograph in our new home, September, 1950.  
Robert (16), Gretchen (35) and George Butche (50)

added to their stress by endless complaining — and reminding them the new house was their dream, not mine. I was selfish, stupid and outspoken like the fourteen year old that I was.

In order to pay for our new home, mom took a part time job on weekends working for one of my dad's lodge friends, Paul Jones. Jonesey operated a newsstand in the Seneca Hotel on E. Broad Street. The additional income was far below what was needed — but times were tough. On weekend evenings mom would get dressed up and dad and I would drive her downtown. Mom liked the job — although she was regularly hit on by the traveling

politicians and salesmen who made up the hotel's clientele. But she stayed with it until a better opportunity opened.

By then, Carl Strandlund's dream of building "The General Motors of housing" in Columbus was coming to an unsavory end. Although his vision proved correct and his minimalist homes met with wide acceptance in the burgeoning market following the war, his company failed to ramp up production due to unkept promises of the government. The demise of Lustron Corporation was brought on by a government conspiracy that reached all the way to the Truman White House. Strandlund's bad luck was just the break mom needed — for when Lustron failed, the U.S. Navy sought to return aircraft manufacturing to its giant facilities at Port Columbus. By 1951 the successor to Curtiss-Wright Corporation, North American Aviation Corporation, had reopened the Columbus Plant to build the first navy Jet trainers and a promising new fighter to be called the F-86. Mom immediately applied for one of the high wage jobs and was soon back at work expediting aircraft parts and assemblies. Although she had not worked full-time since the war, she immediately earned as much as dad and we became a two-income family with options never before thought possible. I don't know if it was to maintain a sense of insecurity, or the need to make money while the opportunity existed, but mom also kept her part time job at the newsstand.

### **The Old Order Changeth**

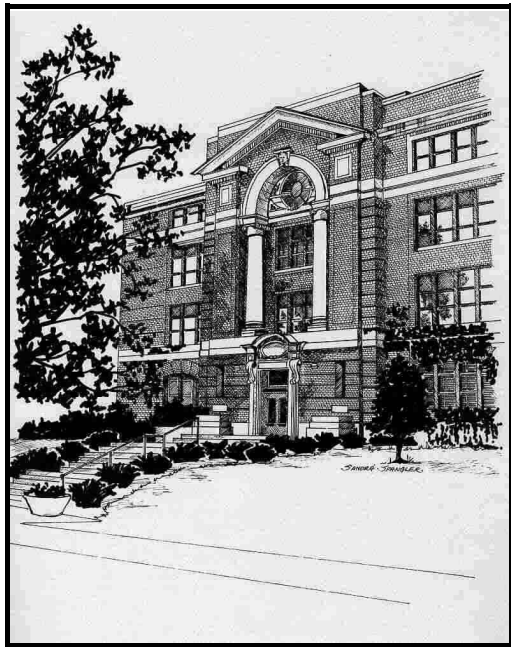
In the summer of 1950, Director John Ramseyer accepted a new post in the College, a Kellogg Foundation supported agency to study and improve school administration. The process of selecting a new director thus began. Dr. Ramseyer wrote about this in a professional journal entitled "We Select Our Director", an unusual democratic process in schools.

The new man was Paul Klohr. After high school teaching and military service overseas, he had a Ph.D. from OSU where he studied with both Harold Albery and Laura Zirbes. He had insisted on a K-12 focus in his graduate studies.

After two years on the faculty of the School of Education at Syracuse University where there was an experiment underway comparable to a university core, Klohner returned to Columbus to become Coordinator of Curriculum and In-Service Education. At the beginning of his third year, he accepted the University faculty's invitation to become director of University School.

In some ways I was new that fall as well, for my assignment to the class of 1954 meant that I was eligible to go out for the football team.

Bill McCormick and I had talked at length about going out for football, so in August we went to the university's expansive athletic facility near Ohio Stadium to meet with the football team and our coach Bill Williams. For a high school football team, our facilities at the university were somewhere between sumptuous and extraordinary. The College of Education was the largest college in the university at that time. It included departments in psychology, physical education and schools of music and art.



Arps Hall - OSU College of Education  
Image from The Spangler Collection:  
OSU College of Education

In addition to the two buildings in the Education Quadrangle along High Street, the college also had Pomerene Hall, on Neil Avenue where, in elementary school, we had learned to swim. Best of all, the sports complex near the stadium was also part of our college which meant that we used the Natatorium for swimming, and the college locker rooms and other facilities for our football program. Our football practice area was in the flatlands along the Olentangy River between the stadium and King Avenue. This vast area was about to become familiar territory for Dick Evans and me.

I knew little of football, beyond what I saw on the few occasions I attended OSU games, but I was not alone. Few of the incoming freshmen knew much about playing football as a sport. Coach Williams started us out with physical examinations and equipment that included uniforms, pads, helmets and cleated shoes. One of the other freshmen footballers was the coach's son, Jack Williams.

For a week or more, we studied the play numbering and notation system used by coach Williams. During these skull sessions, Bill and I came to know Dick Evans, a transfer from Columbus Academy, who shared our inexperience with organized sport. Together, we studied the play book and learned the jargon and lingo of high school football.

When we began two a day practices in the August heat, there was a great deal of running in our new cleated shoes. Dick Evans and I were the heavyweights on the team and nearly always last. Although neither of us weighed in much over 180 pounds, most of the other freshmen were in the 135 to 155 range. Coach Williams decided the best way to get Bob and Dick into shape was to let them take a grand tour around the fifty-five acres of open field every day. We hated it, but we did it. Dick and I became kindred spirits that year. Today, high school linemen often weigh-in near or above 300 pounds and youngsters under 200 pounds are considered for quarterback.



**Stilson's Army**

When classes began in late September, I was delighted to find that our ninth grade teacher, called our core counselor in high school, was to be Adrian Stilson. Only the year before, Stilson had been my math teacher. He was friendly and smiled easily, but he was also the most militaristic person I had known. Although not outwardly aggressive, Adrian Stilson was hard as steel when he wanted to be. He was also meticulously fair and very generous with his time. I did not know that he had personally approved my coming into his 9th grade class, nor that it was to be his job to help me bridge the social and educational gap that resulted from my having skipped a grade.

Although my arrival in the class of 1954 was little noticed by students I had already known for many years, my own adjustment to being in high school proved difficult at first. In the span of only one year my family had moved to a new neighborhood, I skipped the eighth grade, and my outside source of income ended. Bobby Butche, the leader, had suddenly been removed from being a big fish in my seventh grade class, to being a nobody in my ninth grade class. To be sure, some of my problems in the ninth grade would be in learning to bridge the maturity gap — a matter I consciously avoided. Most of my problems that year would come by way of my propensity to explore life ad-hoc, delve deeply into what interested me and avoid doing much of anything outside the interests of a teen-age male. All of my problems, however, were not entirely of my own making.

Football had proven to be more difficult, more time consuming, and a far more challenging activity than I had expected. By the time school started, I was not at all prepared for the overall level of effort required in either football or class work. Although I had come to know Adrian Stilson the previous year, his toughness and militaristic ways had far deeper roots than I remembered. In the first four weeks of school my penchant for avoiding what I wasn't interested in became obvious to Stilson. The ensuing clash was shattering. He nailed me hard for my failures,

making clear he would support me if I met his expectations, but failing that I was not going to make it in the ninth grade.

"I'm a major in the U.S. Army," he no doubt reminded me, "and people do what I tell them. And that's what you're going to have to do."

I remember being stunned by his firmness. He was still friendly, and he still smiled, but he spoke to me in ways I was not at all used to. Our class had chosen the

United Nations as our study topic and I found it very difficult to find much interesting about world political issues. I was very interested in watching the Security Council meetings that were broadcast on TV, and of course, I enjoyed listening to the politicians and pundits speak about the issues. But studying about the UN structure, outreach agencies and how many tons of rice were sent to some African country failed to ring my bell. I wanted to study something interesting, and I was very absorbed in the debate about Truman's use of the A-bomb. Fortunately, Stilson was wise enough to give me an out. Perhaps he sensed that my long-term interests in things scientific was genuine, and that my ongoing pre-occupation with nuclear physics was substantive.

"What interests you in our study of the United Nations?"



Dennis Flanders (l) with biology teacher and football coach William O. Williams.  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

"The Atomic Bomb," I replied, unaware that the A-Bomb and the United Nations were connected mostly in my own mind.

"If you include the social, political and historic elements of atomic weapons development — and tie them into the need for development of the United Nations — I'll agree to atomic energy as your area of study this quarter."

I readily agreed - thinking I had won the debate. Only a fourteen year old would have made such a foolish mistake in judgment. What I had done, I would later come to understand, was to join Adrian Stilson's Army. While other students sometimes ridiculed Stilson for his militaristic bearing and attitudes, becoming a member of Stilson's Army was pivotal to my development. I don't know if he handled other students as directly, or roughly as he did me, but absent an Alpha Male in my life, and being a master of obfuscation and manipulation, I needed a strong authority figure to help me discover limits and learn the importance of meeting my commitments.

Once free of all of the historical and political issues that led to the organizing of the United Nations, I was able to focus on the fundamental issue that I believed had motivated Harry Truman to support the United Nations: Nuclear arms. When I began work on my atomic bomb studies, I discovered physics. While I had been interested in electronics, radio, oscilloscopes and building instrumentation kits, atomic physics was terribly challenging and captivating. Soon I was deep into atomic theory, and reading everything I could about the places and people of the Manhattan Project. Still, Adrian Stilson continued to ask me questions about the hows, whys and whos of the Manhattan Project. I never knew enough to satisfy him. I was in my own world discovering U232, reactors, plutonium, and gorging on my first good taste of physics. One day when I was extolling what I had learned about the super-secret Oak Ridge Research Facility, Adrian Stilson asked me if dropping the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been warranted, or if it had been ethical for Harry Truman to drop them? I had never thought of such questions. Harry Truman was President

of the United States and someone I supported and greatly admired. If he did something it was right, wasn't it? He was President, after all. Besides, I already had my hands full getting into the science of making bombs and I wanted little to do with the ethical issues obtaining to the A-bomb attacks on Japan. Worst of all, Adrian Stilson wanted me to examine the political, ethical and sociological issues and I wanted to be a scientists. I was a disappointed child, and I acted like it.

My childish thinking and attitudes had run me into a brick wall. I was not happy, for I wanted to examine only those areas of the atomic energy that caught my fancy. I had always done that. I had always gotten away, to some degree, with doing what I found interesting. Adrian Stilson was proving to be a big problem.

### **Making Friends and Having Fun**

I was into everything that first quarter. Football took up an inordinate amount of time, but that was only part of the problem. I began to develop friends in my new class. One of them, Bill McCormick, was not only on the football team, but also interested in photography. Best of all, he lived not too far away in Worthington and had a dark room. Although we had met the prior year, being in the same class provided plenty of opportunity for us to share experiences in several areas. My experiences at WOSU had given me considerable interests in broadcasting. Bill, who was studying classical piano that year, was a natural entertainer. We volunteered to work together to put together an entertainment activity for a family night program our class was planning.

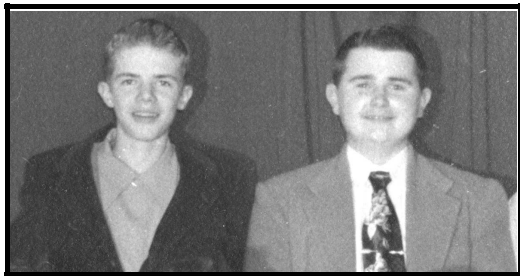
Bill and I decided to put on a make-believe radio broadcast based on one of the popular audience participation programs of that era. The time required to write and rehearse added to my already overloaded schedule. Being the technical person, I was responsible for getting together the necessary microphone, amplifier and record playing equipment. This was to be the first time I would be able to apply my scientific interests with my show business inclinations. The result would change both our lives. Our

performance was successful, not at all easy when the audience consists of parents perhaps wishing they were elsewhere. Our lives changed that night, for my desire to be an entertainer and Bill's natural abilities to relate to an audience made us very much a team. We both fell in love with the notion of being in broadcasting. While we would both follow this interest for many years, broadcasting provided Bill with a career opportunity he had never before considered. Bill and I became a team that night. Best of all, no matter the vastly different roads we traveled in life, our relationship continues to this day.

Among others I discovered in my new class was scrawny kid with a big smile. Keith Bemis, the son of a General Electric Power Plant engineer, had a knack for things mechanical and a natural inclination toward mathematics. Best of all, Keith was also a photographer, and like Bill McCormick, Keith had a wonderful darkroom in the basement of his family's north side home.

Keith was the most practical of us all, for he wasted no time on athletics and had little interest in music, or for that matter broadcasting. What he did have were magically skilled hands capable of building even the most complex structures with seeming ease. Keith was also an archer of considerable skill.

Everything, it seemed, interested me in the autumn quarter of 1950. I loved typing class, and found my first exposure to algebra under the stern instruction of Oscar Schaaf. Algebra helped my understanding of atomic physics. I was, however, not able to carry the load as I had promised. One day in October, when Adrian Stilson



Keith Bemis and Robert Butche in 1950.  
Photo: OSU Archives

said he was going to ask football coach Bill Williams to excuse me from practice so I could catch up on my school work, I was dumbfounded and embarrassed. Everyone would know I was failing — and I hated it.

I only missed a few days of football practice, but I had used the time wisely. Although I believed that once football was over, I would have more time for studies, I was kidding myself. For one thing, I had student tickets to the OSU Football games, which consumed most all of some Saturdays. Worse yet, Bill and I became involved in the Thanksgiving and Christmas programs which brought me to another confrontation with Adrian Stilson.

### **Snow Bowl**

Then something good happened. On the morning of Saturday, November 25th, I left for school to do some work on my A-Bomb project after which I would walk down to the stadium for the Michigan football game. Most of the morning was spent working on finalizing my A-Bomb science project for the high school science day the following week. As I was riding the bus that morning it began to snow. When it came time for me to leave school for the football game, there were already a couple of inches of snow on the ground.

My seat was just behind the north goal line, on B-deck. Although the snow continued, we were comfortable under the cover afforded by C-deck above. By the time the game started there was already five inches of snow on the ground. From my seat I could only see the game when it was being played near the northern end zone. As the snow continued, it became harder and harder to see anything on the field. Just before half time, I decided to go home. Lucky for me, I got on one of the last busses heading north that afternoon. It took nearly an hour to get to the end of the line at Jeffrey Place. From there I walked just over a mile to our home at 552 Wetmore Road. When I got near the house, the drifting snow where the street had been that morning was shoulder high. I trudged through neighbor yards to get home. When the

snow abated that evening, Columbus was in the midst of the worst blizzard in 37 years and the only blizzard ever in the month of November. The sixteen inches of snow that fell that day was a record.

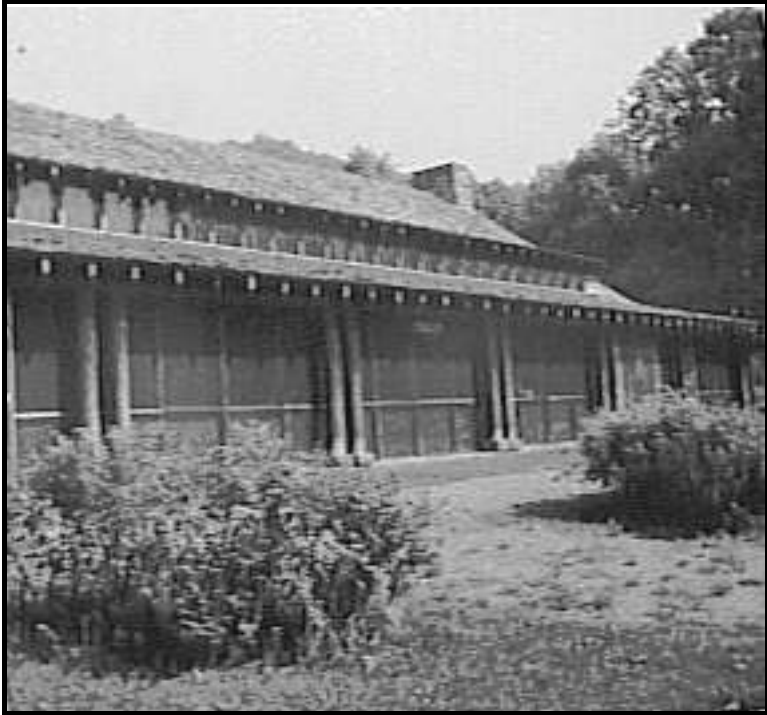
The following weekend, when I showed my A-Bomb project at the science day event, it was judged one of the best at the show. I was thrilled at my first taste of success in the sciences. Two weeks later, when I submitted my 24 page, typewritten report on my A-Bomb studies to Adrian Stilson, he complimented me on my excellent presentation of the scientific issues as well as my well developed history of the Manhattan Project. I had not, however, developed the political link that connected the A-Bomb to the formation of the United Nations.

### **Tar Hollow**

By winter quarter, my outside activities were far fewer. Even better, our core class study topic was one I could get my teeth into, natural resources. Although I discovered basketball over the winter, I remained only a spectator that season. My study habits became better, not so much because I applied myself as much as not having too many activities on my plate. Although my interest in mathematics had always been perfunctory, at best, the evolving study of Algebra caught my attention. By spring, I was a very different person when it came to schoolwork.

Early in spring quarter, our class made its first of two weeklong pilgrimages to one of Ohio's beautiful state parks at Tar Hollow. These trips were undertaken by the ninth and tenth grades each year to widen our interests in nature, the arts, and one another. Bill and I roomed together, along with Keith Bemis. Students did nearly all of the work including cleaning, cooking and entertaining one another. Bill and I took pictures that spring which provided us plenty of extra work when the visit ended.

After a breakfast of ham and eggs and toast in the main lodge, we spent our days in small study groups. We did a great deal of walking up and down the steep hillsides learning about flora and



The Main Lodge in 1952  
at Tar Hollow State Park

fauna from park rangers as well as specialists from OSU. Others engaged in arts projects, or learning the history of southern Ohio. We came together every evening for a hot meal prepared by the girls under the supervision of Claribel Taylor, who was the school's home economics teacher. At night, we sang by the campfire, toasted marshmallows in the large fireplace, or burned off any remaining energy playing ping-pong or trying to discover some way to sneak up the girl's hill at night without being caught.

When we returned to school, I found Bill and I were not the only ones who had taken photographs of our Tar Hollow adventures. Keith Bemis, who was also a photographer with a



home darkroom, thought it would be far better if we could develop and print some of our pictures at school. When we asked Adrian Stilson, who was a photographic enthusiast himself, to help us, he managed to negotiate use of a room on the third floor for a high school dark room. He also taught us about cameras, lens characteristics, depth-of-focus determinations, and how to best use our own cameras. He showed us his prized Leica and even participated in our film developing activities. He also arranged for an enlarger and photographic paper for the darkroom. Needless to say, by spring, Adrian Stilson and I were seeing one another in far different ways. He became an increasingly important male role model for me that year. Best of all, for me, his militaristic ways did not change. It was high time for Robert to learn to snap to and do what he was told.

I grew up a great deal that year. Just in time, too.



## Ninth Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Adrian H. Stilson,  
December 7, 1950*

The ninth grade has chosen "The United Nations" as its first core unit topic this year. First, we briefly investigated some of the antecedent efforts of various nations and individuals to insure world peace. These included The Treaty of Versailles, The League of Nations, The Kellogg-Briand Pack and others. Second, we decided that, in order to understand the purposes and needs of the members of the United Nation, it would be necessary to learn something about the customs, history, and potentialities of the individual nations. At the present time, each student is studying, either alone or in conjunction with a few other students, one or two of the member nations. Later, they will report the results of their investigations to the class.

On November 17, the class was host to the ninth grade parents at an "International Dinner." The decorations, the dinner, and the entertainment following the dinner was planned so as to represent as many as possible of the countries being studied in connection with the unit topic. Nearly everyone worked very hard to make this party successful.

Although this is Bob's first year with the present ninth grade group, he seems to be well on the way of becoming an accepted member of the class. He participates frequently in class discussions and his contributions are usually of a very worthwhile nature.

His writing, at the present time, appears to concentrate on scientific matter, particularly the A-Bomb. He expresses himself well but encounters some difficulty in spelling.

Bob speaks well before a group and gave ample proof of this by writing and presenting ( in conjunction with Bill McCormick ) a radio show at the “International Dinner.” Much of the success of the entertainment and program following the dinner is due to their efforts.

### Typewriting – Mr. Jennings

Bob is making average progress in typewriting. He seems to be interested in his work and he is concerned that his work comes in on time and that it is in good form. He is a good worker and works well with the group. It is necessary that he spend some time on coordination and concentration which is imperative in the building of this skill. Bob has a good attitude toward his work and toward those with whom he works.

### Mathematics – Mr. Schaaf

The main topic of study for the fall quarter is number. A short time was spent on the history of number, and number systems with different bases, but the largest share of the time was divided equally with learning how to multiply, divide, add, and subtract signed numbers and general numbers. Graphing, formulas, and “word” problems are being studied along with general numbers since each of these topics promotes the understanding of the others. The general teaching technique emphasizes student discovery of conclusions. By such a technique, new ideas are built upon the student’s past understandings, and at the same time, the students are better able to apply what they learn. Since no single textbook can be followed, it is of prime importance that each student keep a notebook in which the ideas we study will be recorded. The notebook also should contain applications of these ideas to life situations.

The methods used in discovering mathematical ideas is essentially the same when new ideas are discovered in other fields of learning. It is important that students see this similarity. For this reason, I am urging students to bring in to class and place in their notebooks examples taken from current literature which will illustrate how people draw both valid and invalid conclusions.

I am in the office three evenings a week after school, and I am willing to give help to anyone who may desire it. Many members of the class would profit from this additional help. The class has yet to develop the ability to think as a group on the topics under discussion, but I do see signs which indicate that the class will be making considerable progress in developing this ability in the near future.

Bob has at least average ability in mathematics, but as yet he has not demonstrated this ability. His mastery of mathematics is below the average for the class. Since Bob skipped the eighth grade, he needs to put more time on mathematics instead of less as he seems to feel. I am willing to help him after school, but he has not yet taken advantage of the opportunity. Bob's notebook was very poorly done. It showed little organization and thought on his part. He has handed in most of his assignments, but he attempts to do on about one-half of each assignment. Bob could be more attentive in class.

Football – Mr. Williams

Bob made steady progress in football. It is hoped that he will be able to participate at the beginning of practice next year. With continued improvement his size can be of much value to the team. Bob was cooperative and well liked by his classmates.

Sincerely yours,

Adrian Stilson

NINTH GRADE COUNSELOR



## Winter Quarter

*Adrian H. Stilson,  
April 30, 1951*

Since the last letter, the ninth graders have completed their unit on *The United Nations*. We felt that, on the whole, the choice was a wise one. The unit gave us an opportunity to investigate the history, geography, and customs of numerous peoples throughout the world. In addition, we learned how the United Nations organization came into being and something of what it is attempting to do. Finally, we were able to examine several of the various political and economic ideologies, such as, democracy, socialism, communism, etc.

On March 23, the yearly ninth grade dance took place. It was a very successful effort. The group operated very well in both the planning and the execution of the work involved in the enterprise.

At the present time, we are working on a unit entitled *Natural Resources*. The initial research period is past and individuals are now reporting their results. Many of these reports are of high quality.

We are looking forward to our part on April 27 and our trip to Tar Hollow on May 20 to 24.

Bob's achievements and progress in core this year indicate that the decision to move him into the present group was a sound one. His relationships with other members of the group appear to be generally quite satisfactory and his work this year seems to have been quite challenging. He organizes his thoughts very well and is becoming increasingly adept at expressing himself fluently and agreeable both orally and in his written work. He still experiences some difficulty in spelling and punctuation, but his constant efforts in these directions will indubitably overcome these deficiencies.

### Mathematics – Mr. Schaaf

The main topics of study during the winter quarter were the study of relationships, graphical representation, and the solution of equations in one and two unknowns, and solving story problems. For the most part the progress of the whole class in mastering these topics was satisfactory. During the spring quarter the topics of study will be factoring, fractions, ratio and proportion including indirect measurement.

The class at large has made some improvement in their ability to think as a group and in disciplining themselves.

Bob has improved greatly in his mastery of and interest in mathematics this past quarter. His class ranking jumped from lower third to upper third. He was a bit lax in handing in assignments on time, but he did them well in advance of the clearance date. Bob is not accepted readily by many in the class, but this does not seem to concern him too much. Apparently he would just as soon work with one or two others or by himself. Bob has contributed much more to the thinking of the class than he did during the fall quarter. I have been quite satisfied with Bob's progress.

### Typewriting – Mr. Jennings

Bob is making very satisfactory progress in typewriting. He is industrious and sees to it that all his work is in on time and that it has good form and balance. Bob is energetic and enjoys working at a variety of types of work. He is dependable and cooperative with the students and teachers. He seems to have no difficulty in concentration and coordination.

### Physical Education – Mr. Miner

Bob participated in the class program of physical education during the winter, and at present is with the track team and in class two days per week.

Bob's program during the winter consisted of bowling, tumbling, basketball skills and games and group games. His skill level in these areas is average for his group.

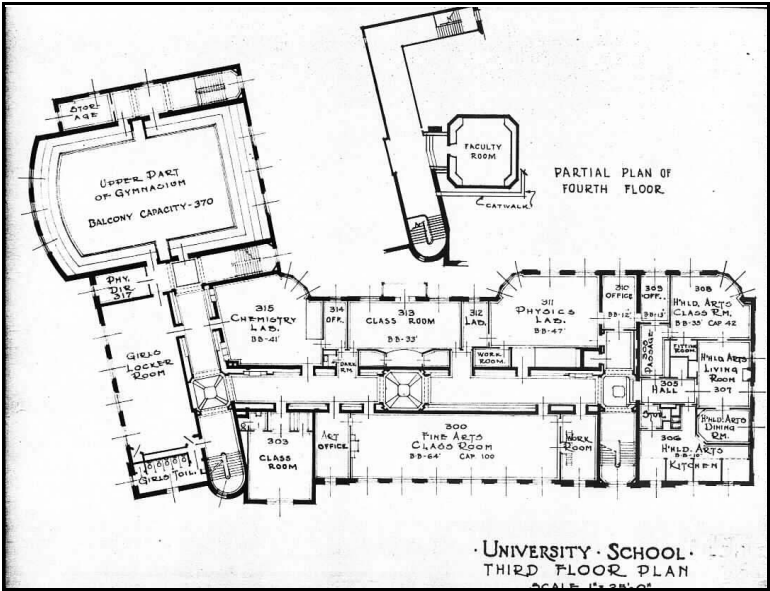


In spite of a serious weight handicap in some activities, Bob shows good coordination and surprising strength. He is well mannered, considerate of others, neat and dependable. He is fairly well accepted by members of his group.

Yours very truly,  
Adrian H. Stilson  
Ninth Grade Counselor



# The High School



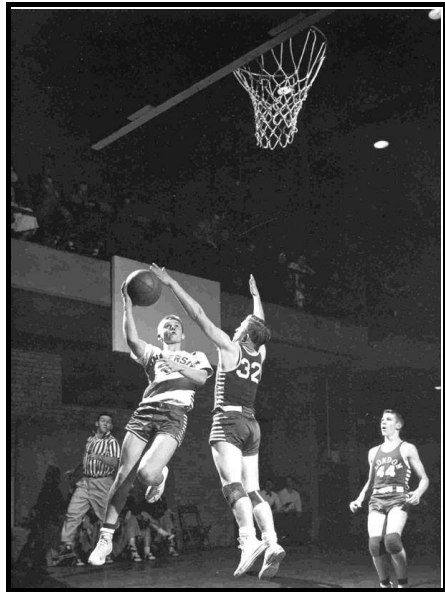
University School Floor Plan, Third Floor: OSU Archives

## Faculty and Facilities

Grade	Room	Teacher	Class Size	Year
10	203-204	Adrian Stilson - Robert Boyd	36	1951-52
11	300	Margaret Willis - Fred Schmieder	48	1952-53
12	311-313	Margaret Willis - Fred Schmieder	48	1953-54



## High School Grades



Flights of Greatness  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

**B**eginning at the tenth grade level, University School significantly increased class size. The larger class size provided greater socialization opportunities for students, a larger pool of males for athletic programs, especially football and basketball, and broader elective opportunities in the sciences, arts, business studies and mathematics. The class size for my tenth grade class was forty-eight students, about a fifty percent increase from the ninth grade.

Our tenth grade class was typical in terms of my prior schooling experiences. About fifteen in our class were full term University School students, meaning that we had been at University School from the first grade. Around twenty new students had

been admitted into our class over the year to replace dropouts, or to increase class size in the middle school grades.

Sixteen new tenth graders had their first taste of University School the last week of September 1951. The significant increase in class size changed us in many ways. The new students brought far different attitudes toward school, and significantly different scholastic experiences. Our new classmates tended to be somewhat better prepared in certain academic fields. The differences in our fundamental skill levels were evidence of significantly different attitudes toward the balance between acquiring knowledge and learning how to think and work with others. By the tenth grade, University School students were capable of undertaking a course of study that required research, planning, analysis and reporting one's findings to the class. Conversely, new students were usually better skilled in the fundamentals of spelling, arithmetic, sentence-parsing, and accustomed to acquiring factoid based knowledge.

The public's impression of University School was sometimes one of low expectations, undisciplined teaching, widespread unaccountability on the part of students and teachers, and systemic underachievement. For incoming students in our tenth grade class, the difference between perception and reality would come as something of a shock.

From an educator's perspective, University School was thought to be the most radical of American's progressive schools. Needless to say, in 1950s America, the term *radical* had little or none of the political connotations common in the 21st century. In today's language, I believe describing University School as being America's most Experimental school, would be more accurate — but even this description would fail to tell one very much about what the school was trying to accomplish.

### **High School Level Core Studies**

It was not uncommon for new students arriving from Columbus Public Schools to assume that the school's

non-competitive academic environment, relatively low levels of teacher assigned home work, and what appeared to be an unstructured self-study learning model would be easy. They soon discovered otherwise. For some, adjustment to a school that required self-motivation, democratic decision-making, self-reliance, group based problem analysis, individual research and extensive writing was not at all easy. The stronger incoming students, especially those with advanced skills in mathematics, language arts, or the sciences would do well in subject area courses. For new students, however, the integrated studies course, known as *core*, which had a large block of time available, was very new and very foreign.

New students sometimes found the transition from the rigid requirements of public school to the research and reporting requirements of core studies at University School proved to be difficult. Not only was University School's study topic driven, research based educational model foreign to public school students, the open ended study requirements of high school level core classes contrasted sharply with the well defined, textbook based study regimen in most public schools. Where once former public school students were required to read, for example, pages 141 through 157 of a textbook, the open-ended and largely undefined demands of core looked deceptively easy. For one thing, there was no textbook for core — not even a prescribed course of study. The student was, instead, responsible for helping to select a suitable area of study. This could take weeks of what may have seemed disorganized activity. Then, once the subject of study was settled, the student was responsible for choosing some area of the study unit, locating suitable resource materials on their own, conferring with the school librarian about potential sources of research materials, and consulting with their core teacher concerning how they intended to approach the issues under study and the format(s) of their report.

For long-term University School students, the subject selection process and choosing one's own area of investigation, research and reporting requirements were normal. For new

students, they were not. Nor were new students always prepared to operate in an open environment that assumed self-direction and self-motivation. For incoming students, the transition was not always easy, but it rarely required more than the first quarter for them to successfully engage in the new system. Even so, long time University School students retained the advantage of being better prepared — especially for the extensive demands for reporting and writing. Perhaps most importantly, long-term University School students were keenly aware of their responsibility to be self-motivated. Those students who were the busiest, least motivated, or less accomplished, sometimes failed to fully meet their core study responsibilities and reporting obligations. I was one of them in the tenth grade. No matter my knowledge of the system, my omnivorous nature wanted to do everything all the time. Life is largely about choices — making them and living with them. My tenth grade year would not be easy — for my natural academic abilities had always made it easy for me to get everything I wanted.

### **Home Room on Steroids**

In the high school, core had the outward appearance of a traditional homeroom. Based on the concepts developed by Harold Alberty and its own experiences, University School's core studies were a blend of English, academic research skills, social studies and science. At the high school level, core consumed two of the five hours of academic studies each day.

Three hours of the school day were devoted to subjects required to provide students sufficient Carnegie Units to meet college admission requirements. Beginning in the tenth grade, biology, mathematics, and foreign language studies anchored a set of elective course offerings that included non-traditional courses such as radio-speech, home economics, arts, music and student publications. The other two and a half hours of the school day were consumed by lunch, physical education, student government activities, team athletics for girls and boys, and incidental activities



such as library research, clubs, and class project activities such as fund raising, dances and so on.

Although core provided students a very wide latitude, and minimal supervision during independent study activities, it was not the only subject area in which students were expected to develop their own work habits. To some degree, all of the elective courses provided students some degree of latitude on the completion of outside assignments and homework. The school's philosophically based learning environment was to let students set their own pace, explore their own limits, and to go as far in their studies as they could.

### **Clearance and Accountability**

While all students exceeded expectations at one time or another, human nature, being what it is, many of us sloughed-off from time to time. Without daily or weekly checking by teachers, a student's failure to complete some or all of his work could go unnoticed for weeks. To make certain all work was completed; to assure that teachers had performed their responsibilities; and that a student's Carnegie units were properly earned, University School invented *Clearance*. On the surface, the idea behind Clearance, was simple: That which has been agreed to must be completed. Thus, at the end of every quarter, students were held accountable for completion of all assigned work. At the end of each quarter, the checks and balances of clearance assured that self-motivation and self-directed study did not deteriorate into non-study.

Here's how clearance worked. At the end of every quarter, each student received a clearance sheet listing every course. All he or she needed to do was to take that sheet to each teacher. If the student had completed all of his or her course work or other outside assignment, the teacher signed. Otherwise, a list of missing work was given to the student. The student typically had about a week to submit the missing work and earn the teacher's certification that the quarter's work was completed. Absent that, the student was required to complete the missing work before classes began

the next quarter. If the work still wasn't completed, the teacher notified parents about the student's failure to meet one or more graduation requirements. With stakes this high, some of us spent many hours and long nights during clearance week fulfilling our work obligations. Some students were required to come back in the summer as well.

In University School, if students were to learn to be self-motivating and reliable adults, they had to have clearly defined requirements and widespread opportunities to accomplish the tasks assigned. Although all classes, including special electives in mathematics and to some degree biology, chemistry and physics, had clearly defined requirements, the level of supervision, and demand for on-time performance varied considerably. In core, where most of the student's self-directed studies were, the lack of ongoing, daily and weekly consequences for not achieving progress in a more or less linear fashion was juxtaposed against a most unpleasant reality. No matter what kept the student from completing required work during the quarter, the last week of each quarter was where self-motivation and direction came face to face with reality.

The University School clearance system could be a very unpleasant experience for those who failed to meet their work requirements for the quarter. In effect, the school's self-study system became a contract between student and teacher in which the student's rate of progress was, to some degree, managed by the student, not the teacher. No matter how many weekly goals, or work assignments the teacher issued, students could largely choose to complete them in a flexible workflow. Although teachers might ask for compliance, or openly question why a student had not completed an important report, essay or other work in a timely fashion, failure to meet these short-term obligations on time was rarely an issue in core.

At the end of each twelve-week quarter, every teacher reviewed the progress - and the work product of each student. Students who had work outstanding were reminded of what was

due, and made to understand that every single item had to be produced before the teacher would certify that they had completed the quarter's work. University School students came to learn what it meant to be responsible for one's own actions and the unpleasant consequences of failing to meet one's contractual responsibilities. Although many, but not all students had clearance issues at the end of each quarter, newcomers sometimes suffered considerable humiliation in their first autumn quarter. For those who had come to University School filled with the notion that it was easy, their first clearance laid bare any notions that University School was not a first rate educational institution.



## Grade Ten



The American System  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1951-52*

Every School has an individual who serves as its disciplinarian. At University School his name was Harold Reynard. I was not prone to misbehavior, so I was greatly surprised at being called into his office in early June of 1951. When I arrived at his office, Reynard was on the phone with the father of a senior boy who had been caught in the backseat of his dad's car in the school parking lot kissing one of the junior girls. Although such behavior was considered well out of line in the somewhat repressive sexual environment of the 1950s, Reynard's attitude was 'boys will be boys'. By the time the conversation ended, I had accumulated some juicy gossip to share with my classmates. What Reynard wanted with me that afternoon was to hire me to work around school that summer. He needed

someone to tend the school supplies center during summer school. I jumped at the offer to make some money.

When summer school ended, Reynard had me move all of the tables used in the elementary school into the shop area where I was to strip them, re-sand each one, and then apply new varnish. It was very hard work for seventy-five cents an hour. With all of the windows open, and little breeze on most days, it was miserably hot inside the school that summer. When I finished the job in early August there were still two weeks before football practice was to begin. Reynard liked my work and asked me to go to his home on Weber Road and dig up and rebuild all of the sidewalks.

### **The Radio Bug**

University School's educational laboratory activities always included experimentation within established subject areas. An unusual confluence of educational out-reach activities within the College of Education, and the unique talents of one of University School's teachers came together in the years after the war to create one of the school's least respected academic course offerings. For the remainder of my education at University School, the large amount of time I invested in this course was cause for criticism and some derision by other teachers and my parents. The communication skills learned proved of considerable value to many students in the course, and helped me throughout my adult life by better preparing me for public speaking, clearer writing, and thinking on my feet.

Jane Stewart, who created the course in the late 1940s, had worked with and studied under OSU's I. Keith Tyler. Dr. Tyler was nationally known for his work in the field of using radio as a teaching aid in America's schools. During his long tenure in the College of Education, Tyler was the driving force behind Ohio State's immensely successful educational radio broadcasts. It was under his auspices, and with broad support from Laura Zirbes and others, that the Ohio School of the Air programs were conceived, written and broadcast on WOSU for nearly twenty years. Although

Tyler's work had focused on *radio listening* in the classroom, the frequent involvement of University School students in School Of The Air broadcasts raised issues in Jane Stewart's mind about the potential educational benefits of radio broadcasting experiences.

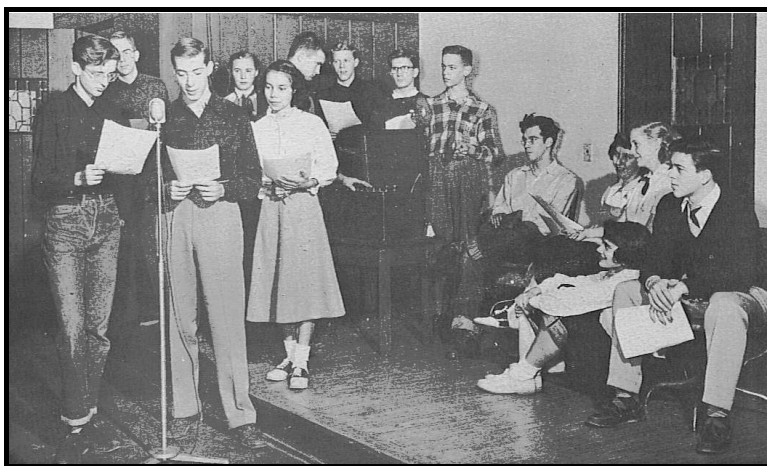
By 1948, Tyler and Stewart came up with the idea of a survey course in radio writing and production. While the course fit well into the school's laboratory setting, offering such a course in the high school seemed questionable. The issue for the school was one of relevance to its mission of preparing students for college. Absent either grades or class rankings for its students, the faculty was faced each year with translating its curriculum, including the complex multi-disciplinary core course, into sufficient Carnegie credits for college admission. English, biology, mathematics, history, foreign languages, physics and chemistry were the cornerstone courses for Carnegie credits. Although business courses, such as typing and shorthand seemed to have relevance, and even the arts, including music and fine arts were acceptable, a course in radio writing and announcing seemed largely a diversion of energy away from what was traditional high school studies. With Tyler's considerable influence, and the commitment of one of the school's most experienced teachers, University School began to offer a course under the name of Radio Speech. It was assumed, from the outset, that the course would probably be a one-time only offering to students. The idea that some might want to continue in the course for more than one year seemed unlikely, at best.

In 1950, Jane Stewart and Paul Bogen wrote *The Radio Workshop in the School* – one of the first educational publications addressing media education in the high school. While Jane Stewart was on the cutting edge of what is now known as communications studies, the course as defined in the early years was of limited educational value. It's major attraction to Bill and me in the fall of 1951 was a commitment by WOSU to provide Stewart's class air-time and production facilities during spring quarter. This provided Jane Stewart two quarters to teach broadcasting etiquette, radio

history, radio formats, radio script writing techniques, and radio dramatics. Students learned how to use microphones, to read scripts and how to act for radio drama. Then, in spring quarter, the class would write and produce a series of high school news, interview and dramatic programs under the name Buckshot. These programs were aired on Friday afternoons at 5 p.m. Some were broadcast live and others were tape recorded for later broadcast.

The Radio bug had bitten Bill and me, and to some degree, Dick Evans, as well. While most of our male classmates were largely looking forward to football season, Bill and I counted the days until we could begin to satisfy our growing interest in broadcasting.

The class of 1954, and especially McCormick and Butche, infused the course with so much energy that we drew new attention to the course. Bill was immensely popular in the high school and widely known for his outgoing personality and considerable entertainment skills. In addition to an interest in writing and performing, I brought years of technical experience as well. Jane Stewart tapped our energy and enthusiasm to broaden the educational values of the course. Bill and I made radio events out of



Radio Speech Class - ca 1951



nearly every possibility. I even configured the necessary radio equipment so that Bill and I could do play-by-play of the high school basketball games. Neither of us did at all well at play-by-play, but we learned how hard it is to paint *word pictures* – skills that would play an important role in both our lives later on.

One of the girls in the class of 1953, Diana Baker, liked the new direction and energy in Radio Speech that year. Although it seemed unlikely that Diana would consider broadcasting as a career, she was very talented and capable of reading scripts *cold* with style and clarity. Only Bill shared her cold reading skills, so they often worked together. Bill and Diana soon became romantically involved in a relationship that lasted several years. Both would go on to important professional careers in broadcasting.

I've described this course, and our experiences in detail because Bill and I changed it, and it changed us. More to the point, Bill and I enrolled in this course three years in a row much to the disapproval of our parents and our core counselors who felt Radio Speech kept us from expanding our interests in more traditional academic subject areas. While I believe that everyone who took this course expanded their knowledge of language and increased their communication skills, three of us enjoyed some success in broadcasting.

Although Diana Baker, under considerable pressure from her family, would go on to Nursing School at OSU, Bill and I were clearly planning for careers in broadcasting. Diana completed her studies all the while continuing to act on many of the School of the Air dramatic programs on WOSU. I joined Diana in dramatic acting on WOSU in my freshman year at Ohio State and together, we often did three or four back-to-back live radio dramatic programs daily in which she and I played all the parts. I was never as good at the cold read acting as Diana, but thanks to her I grew in my on-air personae and skills. By the end of fall quarter, I had my first radio job at WVKO undertaking the Saturday morning sign on shift and the Sunday night sign-off duties.

Diana went into nursing and became prominent in the Ohio State Nurses Association. Before long, Diana met Fred Calland at WOSU. Calland became her second husband, and the couple moved to the Boston area where Fred was going to broadcast a program of operatic music. In 1970, Fred and Diana were among the founders of National Public Radio. Fred Calland was regularly heard on NPR programs, including *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* until his retirement in 1989.

Bill moved on to a long career in both television and radio. His career spanned two decades that included serving as on-air talent at WBNS-TV, disc-jockey at WRFD, news director at WIRE radio in Indianapolis and news anchor posts in television. Even today, Bill McCormick remains involved in television production, writing and editing.

Only six months after graduation from high school, I became acquainted with two of NBC's best known sports personalities, Mel Allen and Curt Gowdy.



Melvin Israel Allen  
Voice of the New York Yankees

During the 1954 football season, I worked as a spotter for Allen on both NBC radio and television football broadcasts. The next year, I worked some of the NBC television football game of the week broadcasts with Mel Allen – including the OSU win at Michigan in 1955. In those days, radio paid more than television, so I also participated in many of Mel Allen's NBC radio football broadcasts where I had a small on-air role that Mel believed broke down the single announcer tradition in broadcast sports.

Confusion resulting from the sudden loss of the broadcast

quality telephone line to NBC's radio central at Rockefeller Center gave me my first network solo opportunity. NBC radio and television were both broadcasting the game that day. Curt Gowdy was doing the television play by play from the fifty yard line booth upstairs in the Ohio Stadium press-box, and Mel and I, along with the NBC remote engineer and Mel's brother Larry, were doing the radio broadcast from a rarely used cubicle at the far north end of the press box.

With less than five minutes before air-time the broadcast circuit to Radio Central went dead. Although the backup telephone circuit remained operational, as broadcast time approached, Mel and Larry decided it best to go up to the TV booth where Mel would work with Curt until the radio problem was remedied. That left me and the remote engineer hanging in suspense as AT&T tried to re-route the game feed. 1956 was at the end of the great era of radio broadcasting, but most Americans still liked to listen to football games described by legendary broadcasters like Mel Allen. I remember well Larry Allen telling me that the OSU-Michigan game was going to be carried on seven-hundred fifty NBC radio stations that day.

As game time neared, I was at the NBC microphone counting one to five over and over again, but no one could hear us in New York. Suddenly, the NBC engineer exclaimed, "they've got us in New York. Thirty-seconds." I had no idea what I was supposed to do, but I was certain the NBC engineer wasn't planning on doing the play by play.

"New York's coming to us in ten seconds – on my cue," he told me."

I thought about running, for although I was doing 12 hours of live radio broadcasting each week in Columbus, the thought of 750 stations depending on me for the football game, was terrifying. Although I had been at Mel Allen's side many times, and knew exactly how he liked to begin radio football games, doing it live was not anything I had ever even contemplated.

“New York’s in your cans,” the engineer said abruptly, “. . . they’ll take us in five . . .”

Suddenly my earphones came alive with the game music and the New York announcer telling perhaps as many as ten million Americans, “. . . and now here’s Mel Allen with the play-by-play.”

My mind wanted to freeze, but by then my mouth was already running. “It’s cold and windy in Ohio Stadium this afternoon as the Buckeyes of Ohio State host the Michigan Wolverines in one of the legendary rivalries in college football.”

I shall never forget what I heard behind me as I drew a breath to continue, “Who the hell is that?” someone in New York was shouting. I was crushed, but years of training kept me going. As long as NBC aired what I was saying, I was determined to carry the ball as far as I possibly could. All I had to do was maintain Mel’s easy going friendly style and remember as much as I could from what I had heard about the game from Woody Hayes and my many player-friends on the OSU team.

“Today’s match up is widely believed to be a continuation of last year’s seventeen to nothing Ohio State win at Ann Arbor. That remains to be seen, for this game is like no other ever played in the giant horseshoe, for this is Heisman Trophy winner Hop Cassidy’s last game in one of the greatest venues in college sport. So stay with NBC for one of the great classics in all of college sports – Ohio State versus Michigan.”

As soon as I uttered the cue ending the opening, New York filled in the remainder of the opening and the first commercial. While that was happening, the door popped open and Mel and Larry dashed to their seats.

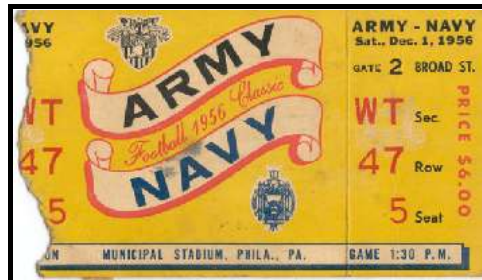
“Where are we?” Mel asked as he sat down and spread out his line up cards in front of him.

“We’re through the opening and in the first commercial break,” the NBC engineer told Mel with what must of been a great sigh of relief. A few seconds later, we received our cue from radio

central and Mel picked it up, “Hello everybody this is Mel Allen with the line ups for today’s game.”

With that, the broadcast began. Neither Mel nor Larry said a word about what had happened during the broadcast. I was neither chided nor criticized for going ahead without Mel. I understood why, too, for Mel had been doing radio and television play-by-play for twenty five years. He had been the voice of the New York Yankees for longer than I had been alive. Along the way he had seen everything go wrong that could – and it was all part of the business. I might have been young and inexperienced, but to Mel I was a fellow broadcaster, and I had done what was needed to hold the audience. That’s what he would have expected from any professional. After the game, when Mel’s brother came back to the booth with Mel’s seven hundred fifty dollar talent fee, Mel peeled off a hundred dollar bill and handed it to me as my share.

Although Mel Allen urged me to go to law school at the University of Alabama, his alma mater, for which he was willing to pay all of my tuition and costs, I was reluctant to do so. That fall, we worked the Army-Navy football game together on NBC radio. It was my last fling in network broadcasting, for although Mel promised to find a place for me with the Yankees organization during the summers, including NBC’s World Series television broadcasts for which he had just signed a four year contract, I had a new love: Flying.



### Bill ‘n Bob

By the summer of 1951, Bill and I were frequent visitors at each others homes – although we lived nearly five miles from

one another. While previously it had been photography that had been our common interest, beginning in 1951 our relationship would broaden in many areas. Football, broadcasting, photography, ice skating parties, swimming and socializing were activities we shared that year. Bill was an accomplished pianist, a natural entertainer, and increasingly, a girl-magnet.

On March 24<sup>th</sup> Bill celebrated his sixteenth birthday and soon had his driver's license. Occasionally, he would wrangle use of the McCormick family's new Oldsmobile Eighty-Eight and come by and pick me up for jaunts around town. I had never been in a new car before, so the rare times we were out together in the Olds were always very memorable. Officially, the Olds was to be his mother's car, for Bill's dad, J. Don McCormick, was an on the road salesman for Columbus Coated Fabrics who drove his own car. On my birthday on August 16<sup>th</sup>, I took my driving exam at the old Ohio State Patrol driving test center on E. Broad Street. Dad let me use the old 1947 Plymouth he had bought to replace his aging Ford. When I passed the test, he also let me drive home.

### **Sudden Shock**

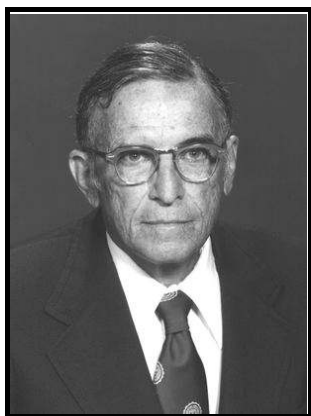
One afternoon that year, Bill returned home from school to find his mother, Grace, seemingly missing from their home on Fox Lane. Although Grace McCormick was still in her forties, she had suffered a massive stroke that afternoon in her upstairs bedroom. When Grace was hospitalized, Don McCormick needed Bill to run errands and follow up on his mother while Don was back on the road. That meant that Bill inherited use of the new Oldsmobile 88. Although Grace McCormick would recover, the sudden availability of an automobile changed the world for Bill and me that year.

Anytime we had to go someplace, we always had the Olds at hand. By spring, Bill was into driving to school every day – and picking me up on the way. Bill was more than a good friend, by then, for we shared interests in photography, football and broad-

casting. Best of all, Bill was mature for his age – and very responsible in his driving habits.

### **Kiefer: Friend and Teacher**

When school began in late September, our class size was increased by 50% and divided into two sections. One of the sections would be taught by Adrian Stilson and the other by Robert Boyd. Bill and I landed in Adrian Stilson's section. I couldn't have been more pleased.



Dr. Melvin Newman  
Photo: OSU Archives

One of the new students in our section was the son of one of OSU's most famous professors in biochemistry, Melvin Newman. Kiefer's dad was serious minded and disciplined – characteristics his eldest son rarely shared. He also fancied music, Louis Armstrong, Prokofiev, and Bach pretty much in that order. So too was Mel Newman a devoted golfer.

Kiefer Newman, on the other hand, was a big kid like me. He talked loud, and sometimes it seemed, constantly, but it was clear he was immensely intelligent and potentially an excellent student. I can't really say we liked one-another all that much at first, for we were from totally different worlds. Fortunately, we soon discovered that we could talk to one another about technical subjects at a level well above what either of us had enjoyed previously with other peers. Kiefer was, like me, immensely interested in technology – especially electronics which had been one of my own interests since Kip and I had built our fifth-grade weather station.

Kiefer's rambunctious attitude and sometimes outrageous behavior resulted in his being shunned by many in our class. He was not very interested in athletics, the arts, or core studies, either, but he excelled in math and everything scientific. Best of all, Kiefer had learned from his dad, that mathematics is central to all the sciences – and that understanding how things work often requires a mathematical statement of the problem – and the solution.

In a matter of a few weeks, Kief and I were engaged in building electronic instruments, amplifiers and radio transmitters. Before long, Kiefer and I became good friends and familiar faces to our respective parents. Best of all for me, Kiefer's knowledge of physics and electronic theory was far beyond mine, so our experiments and projects were immensely educational for me.

Given Kiefer's technical knowledge, none of the instrument kits we purchased from the Heath Company, was built exactly as they had been designed. So our Oscilloscopes were built with extra large capacitors so we could observe sine waves at extremely low frequencies.

Kief would spend hours expanding my knowledge of capacitance, inductance, tuned circuits, resonance and frequency response. Then, no matter what we were building, we would alter the design of our new equipment to improve its performance, or simply to make it work better. Before autumn quarter ended, I was certain I wanted to become an electrical engineer. Although Kiefer would go on to earn a Ph.D in Electrical Engineering, my own omnivorous interests were far too broad to be limited to studying only



Kiefer Newman, Ph.D  
Self Portrait, 2005



one thing. I wanted to study everything.

### **In Over My Head**

It had to happen eventually. With so many interests, outside activities and a sparsity of self-discipline, I began to falter under the load. My two most difficult subjects in Autumn Quarter were French and Math. I was very interested in both subjects – or, at least, so I thought.

Mathematics was not usually difficult for me. So, when my attention was elsewhere, I could always let my math assignments go undone. Oscar Schaaf, who taught college level mathematics at OSU, was not well schooled in University School's methods, nor its tendency to let students move at their own pace. He lectured as if we were college students, and expected us to respond that way in class and to fully complete our homework – on time. Although I could follow what was going on in class, my outside work slipped both in quality and quantity. I was not motivated and I had far too many other activities and interests. As the quarter progressed, football, radio speech and other activities provided me plenty of

opportunities to let other subject areas slide. Mathematics was not the only course I let slip that quarter.

Edward Allen, who was one of the younger teachers at University School, was destined to become one of OSU's superstars. Allen had come to University School in 1945 from Montclair College in New Jersey. He was twenty-two years of age and anxious to slip the shackles of the traditional translation method of language teaching. Allen was



Oscar Schaaf

certain that his full immersion approach would work at the high school level, and one of the reasons he came to University School was because he would be free to adopt his own curriculum.

At University School, free of the curricular restrictions typical in most school settings, Ed Allen pioneered a full immersion language teaching system that included extensive cultural and folk related activities. To accomplish this in one language would have been enough for teachers of lesser vision, but Ed Allen did it in both French and Spanish. He furthered his own language skills and cultural understanding with annual trips to France including one spent entirely in search of folk music and folk dance resources.

I did fine with the costumes and dancing, but absent much if any knowledge of the parts of speech, learning about verbs and nouns in a class where no English was used was sometimes incomprehensible. I'm certain that students who had come from public schools – and knew something of the structure of language – found Allen's full immersion approach far easier than I. Although I was very interested in developing language skills, I was not one of Ed's best students. Over time, we adjusted to one another. Allen's criticism of my study-habits were frequent, direct and largely accurate.

I was loathe to spend time conjugating verbs, or trying to write in the French idiom. Once I began to get a handle on what was being said in class, and joined in the dialogue and question method Ed Allen used, I began to do much better. I was all the better for the experience, and in my senior year, I helped Allen photograph many of the folk dance and cultural activities he developed at University School for use in his doctoral dissertation.

Ed Allen's contributions to language instruction kept him teaching for sixty-one years including after retirement positions at Ohio Wesleyan and Ohio State.

### **Arts Involvement**

The University School arts programs included wood shop and related arts, fine arts including drawing, painting and jewelry,

instrumental and vocal music, and, for some students, music theory and composition. In high school, I chose to enroll in the Choral Music course.

One of our music teachers, Mary Tolbert, who directed the chorus, was well schooled in the choral repertoire – having taught for several years in the Fred Waring summer choral programs. In the years I was singing in the chorus, we performed choral programs both in the school and at other venues. One of my classmates, since the first grade, Martha Dale, served as our accompanist. Our repertoire was varied, ranging from the Hallelujah Chorus, to the Waring arrangements of *The Night Before Christmas* and *You'll Never Walk Alone*. Miss Tolbert also produced two full scale operettas while I was in high school. *Desert Song* was presented in Hughes Hall in 1952, and *Brigadoon*, starring Shirley Stoughton and Bill McCormick in 1954.

### **Tesla-Coils in the Night**

When football season was over, I made a significant effort to overcome my inadequate study habits. No matter my good intentions, I also broadened my outside activities that year. Kiefer Newman and I began a long list of electronics projects including a giant Tesla-Coil we built in his workshop in the basement of his parent's home on Coventry Road in Arlington. Kiefer's interests were far more narrow than mine, which made him an excellent teacher of electronics theory for me during our high school years. Most everything we did in electronics was educational for me – and Kief was always a willing teacher. Although I didn't know it at the time, my omnivorous nature often resulted in mastering subjects in which I had a particular interest. It would be several more years before I saw the pattern, but, largely thanks to Kiefer Newman, I was coming full circle on broadcasting. Not only was I a writer, budding producer and increasingly experienced air-personality, I was also fast becoming equally knowledgeable about the technical side of broadcasting.

Before the year was out, Kief and I were into building AM and FM transmitters, jamming radio stations and broadcasting from his basement to no-doubt startled Arlington households. In the doing, I was absorbing a large measure of what Kiefer was teaching me – and increasingly developing my knowledge about everything electronic. I went on to take the exhausting two-day test for an First Class Radiotelephone licence, as did Kip Patterson. A First Class FCC license was required to work on and/or operate radio and television station transmitters.

### **Junior Achievement**

During Autumn quarter we learned that University School had joined Columbus' Junior Achievement program and that all upper-school students interested in gaining first hand business experience were invited to attend an organizational meeting at the Junior Achievement center at 79 N. Third Street. I was only modestly interested until Warren E. Parkinson, Executive Director of the JA program in Columbus came to tell us about the many exciting opportunities available to us free in the Junior Achievement program. When he said that one of the new JA sponsor companies was WBNS-TV I was ready to commit.

In only four short years I had gone from watching snow on Phil Tinsky's little TV, to signing up to help produce television programs. Life was full of so many opportunities, and I wanted to be part of all of them.

There were perhaps fifteen teenagers present the night I showed up at the JA Center at 79 North Third Street. In addition to the high schoolers, there were three advisors from WBNS-TV. One of the advisors, John Francis Xavier Cox, was WBNS-TV's public service director. He was accompanied by Chuck Cady, a tall lanky man who was a producer-director for the station. WBNS-TV also sent along someone from the business office who worked with us to organize and name our company, plan a sale of stock to raise capital from shareholders, and to elect officers.

The plan for company operation was very exciting. We were going to produce a variety show comprised of acts by Columbus area high school students. The 30 minute show would air on Saturday afternoons. Our job was to help pick the acts and to sell commercial time to other JA companies. It all sounded wonderful to me.

The first try-outs were scheduled about a week later. The floor below Junior Achievement was unoccupied, so the TV tryouts were held in what had been unfinished warehouse space. Frank Jakes, a producer-director from the station, arrived to find the place filled with aspiring acts. Everyone it seemed, wanted to be on television. Most of those who came that morning were aspiring singers and musicians. But, some were novelty acts including several baton twirlers. Although the auditions continued for well over two hours, a very small number of the acts were even heard. Eventually, the producer-director left without explanation.

Whoever had the idea that fifteen teenagers could produce a weekly half-hour variety-act television program had badly miscalculated. Not even the professionals at the TV station could have pulled it off.

In the weeks that followed, our company published a business plan, sold stock, and worked with the men from the TV station. By Thanksgiving, we were finally in business. The talent show variety program was out. In its place, WJA-TV would produce a fifteen-minute Saturday afternoon program by and about kids our age. Our advisors were John Cox and Chuck Cady.

Those of us who had previous broadcast experience, or who were in radio-speech classes in our schools, did the writing – and all of the on-camera commercials. Although other JA companies sold their products to the general public, in an effort to give them wider opportunities, WJA-TV was limited to selling commercials only the JA companies. As a result, commercials on our Saturday afternoon programs went for \$2.50.

All of that year's programs were broadcast live using a single camera in Studio-A at WBNS-TV's Twin Rivers Drive

location. In the days before videotape, the pressure on everyone involved to write, produce and/or perform was far beyond what high-schoolers were used to.

The anticipation and rehearsals were nerve racking. I was so terrified by the time I was to deliver a live one-minute commercial pitch that my voice would crack, or I would lose my place on the tall cue-cards used in the days of early television. No matter how poor the program was, or the stark amateurism of the on-air personalities, we had the power of the new medium working for us. Every sales pitch invited viewers to call our order taking volunteers at Fletcher 3881, the station's well known public phone bank number. Every commercial produced orders for the participating JA company. Well before Christmas, we had sold all of the commercial availabilities in our program.

No matter our financial success that year, the WJA-TV adventure was not at all satisfactory to the television station. The reasons were not hard to understand, for WBNS-TV was a class operation that produced a wide range of local programs that were among the very best in the market. For those of us who participated, the education was invaluable, but at the end of the year, it was clear that WBNS-TV was having second-thoughts about their company sponsorship of Junior Achievement activities.

### **Ohio Stadium in the Spring**

In the spring of 1952, I went out for the track team as a runner and a shot putter. I had never had much interest in track and field, but after two years of football I had come to enjoy team sports. Some of my interest in track that year was no doubt the testosterone driven need to compete, but it was also, for me, the satisfaction of shared experiences with other young men.

Robert Miner, our men's physical education teacher, was our track coach. He was from the East and spoke with a decidedly New York accent. He could be ruff and gruff – but he was a patient and engaged teacher. He wanted me to try everything to see what I liked best. It didn't take long for me to recognize that my size

may have been a significant help in football, but it wasn't at all helpful in either sprint or relay running. Long Jump and Pole Vault were not at all suited to my body type.

One day Bob Miner suggested that I try shot putting. Only two others on our track team, Jan Shedd and George Brilliant were shot putters that year – and they were both far better than I. But, I decided I liked the event – and it soon became my specialty.

We practiced on the OSU track team facilities under Ohio Stadium that spring. We traveled to a couple of meets at schools in our league, and we hosted two meets on our own turf that year. For home meets, we used the track and field facilities in the horseshoe. Although we largely took for granted using Ohio State buildings, facilities and sporting venues at University School, hosting a track meet for some of the other small schools in our league was impressive. Unfortunately the wonderful track inside the stadium, made famous by Jesse Owens in the 1930s, was removed when the stadium was upgraded and expanded in 2000.

1951 was a good year. Best of all, I seemed to be getting myself together. Not everyone, however, would share that opinion.





## Tenth Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Adrian H. Stilson,  
December 19, 1951*

The tenth grade has chosen the topic of "Helpful Living" as the first core unit of work. Thus far, the human body has been the focal point of interest. We have studied the human skeleton, the bones of which it is comprised, and its overlaying muscles in some detail. At present, we are investigating the location, structure, functions, and diseases of the various systems of organs throughout the body. Before we terminate our work on this topic, we plan to investigate the general subjects of mental health and public welfare services. In addition, each student will conduct a personal investigation of some specific topic relating to healthful living.

During the fall quarter, the class has had a class party and a paper drive. For most of the students, both activities resulted in enjoyable and valuable experiences. We are now beginning our planning for a dance which will be held during the winter quarter.

Bob is making very satisfactory progress in core this year. Despite numerous interests and activities other than the more or less academic work involved in the day-to-day preparation for school, Bob is conscientious in meeting all of his various responsibilities. His writings, which tend to be about technical and scientific matters, show a good command of the language and a fairly thorough basic knowledge of the subject. He participates frequently and ably in group discussions and his relationships with other members of the class are steadily improving. I feel that Bob's experiences as a part of the discussion conference on world peace were particularly valuable to him.

General Math – Mr. Schaaf

The emphasis in this course is on solving practical everyday problems making use of mathematics and on understanding enough of the “whys” and “wherefores” of elementary mathematical processes to increase their chances of using and retaining this ability over a long period of time. The topics studied this quarter include a review of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing whole numbers, fractions and decimal fractions and percentage. I am quite pleased with the way the class has worked thus far. Next quarter we will probably spend considerable time solving problems dealing with banking and insurance.

Bob’s work has been fairly satisfactory but I am a bit disappointed that he has not been more concerned about overcoming his lacks in arithmetic skills. His ability to reason logically and in knowing what to do to get an answer to a problem is very good. He occasionally is the center of disturbance in class but in general I am quite satisfied with his behavior. I believe that if he would hand in his assignments more regularly he would improve his arithmetic skills. I know it would make it easier for me to give him any help he might need.

French I – Mr. Allen

Bob seems to have considerable linguistic ability. He comprehends spoken French quite rapidly and has little difficulty grasping new work. Most of the time he shows interest and enthusiasm in his class work. His pronunciation is rather good. On the other hand, his written work is often filled with errors in spelling and grammar. This is due to his weak study habits. He has not yet learned how to study. Frequently this quarter he came to class totally unprepared. The learning of a foreign language requires daily practice at home. I recommend that Bob make a schedule that will allow him adequate time to study his French each day. As soon as he devises effective study habits he will make steady progress in French.

Radio Speech – Miss Stewart

The radio speech class has spent the greater portion of this quarter learning the techniques of writing and performing for radio. Bob has exhibited a great deal of interest and talent in this area. He is eager to learn new techniques and takes the initiative in out-of-class projects which will further develop his skills. He has spent hours recording on tape; this experience plus the broadcasting and taping of at-home basketball games have resulted in rapid improvement. Bob is always willing to help others in the class and is also very willing to accept constructive criticism from his classmates and adults.

Chorus – Miss Tolbert

The chorus has been scheduled for this year in a way to provide opportunity for students to combine Chorus with orchestra or band, and also to meet with the School Council and school committees. This means that about half of the Chorus meets daily while the other half is scheduled irregularly for two, three or four periods each week. It is apparent that the students who have combination schedules find some difficulty in moving ahead with the group and the Chorus as a whole progresses more slowly due to these flexible arrangements. For this reason it is even more important that the students who have the privilege of being in more than one group make every effort to be an effective part of the class on their combined schedules. Individual conferences have been held with each student to determine his range and type of voice and to give suggestions for his own problems and stage of skill.

We were pleased with the singing of the Chorus for the Thanksgiving Assembly. The class is now reading through a variety of Christmas literature and making plans for the presentation of an operetta this spring.

Bob is in Chorus each day and contributes to all phases of the class work in very constructive ways. He was elected manager

by his classmates and he has been very responsible in taking care of the equipment which the class uses. He is improving in his ability to read music and to sing the bass harmony. He enjoys singing. On a standardized music test his score indicated good musicianship. Because of his very cooperative spirit, his good ideas, and his interest in working consistently with others he is recognized for qualities of leadership. We want to encourage him to develop these abilities in this area.

We were please with the singing of the Chorus for the Thanksgiving Assembly. The class is now reading through a variety of Christmas literature and making plans for the presentation of an operetta this spring.

Sincerely yours,  
Robert M. Boyd  
Adrian H. Stilson  
TENTH GRADE COUNSELORS

## Winter Quarter – Cover Letter

*Adrian H. Stilson,  
May 8, 1952*

Bob's personal evaluation is objective and true. He is making very satisfactory progress and is unusually conscious in meeting his responsibilities to the best of his ability.

If you should desire a conference regarding Bob's progress, I would be happy to arrange for a time and place.

Your truly,  
Adrian Stilson

## Winter Quarter – Self Report

*Robert Butche,  
May 8, 1952*

### Core

For this quarter the Tenth Grade Core group has been studying “HEALTHFUL LIVING.” In relation to this study, we have taken trips to—The OMAR Bakery—the Blind School—the Hamilton Dairy—The State School—The State Hospital—and the Columbus Water Works. I would say that all of these trips have been worthwhile. At the present time, we are learning more about good study habits. My efficiency in core has been fairly good this quarter. I try to meet all deadlines on time and usually do. My work is neat and fairly accurate. I try to organize my work so I will have time to do a good job.

My group co-operation is usually good. I try to stick to all personal and group decisions. My study habits have improved considerably this year. My work is much more through and concise.

I think my respect for others has improved a great deal too. I’ve lost the attitude that maybe I know everything.

On the whole I think my gains in core have been good for the most part, although there is always room for improvement.

### GENERAL MATHEMATICS-----

In General Math for this past quarter we’ve been working on percentage, Bookkeeping, Geometry and Trigonometry.

I have been applying myself much more this quarter. Mainly because I have found an interest in what we are doing. One other thing that has helped me, is my trying to hand in all assignments on time.

FRENCH I-----

This quarter we've put on our French Festival,..” LA FETE ALSIACIEN” meaning the Alsiacien Festival. This program was put on for the whole school and our parents. We are now working on learning more vocabulary. During the Winter quarter I have been trying to study much more. Mainly because I've found an interest in learning French. I think my spoken French has improved considerably.

RADIO SPEECH-----

For the first part of this quarter we've been working on writing our scripts for Buckshot. We are now working on producing these shows.

My improvements in Radio Speech have been numerous. My voice has improved a great deal. I find Radio Speech to be one of my favorite classes, along with French of course. I think this course has helped me a lot on my reading ability too.

Sincerely,  
Bob

## Spring Quarter

*Adrian H. Stilson,  
May 9, 1952*

The tenth grade seems to be making satisfactory progress toward a successful school year in their class activities as well as in their respective core groups. They have moved forward in a reasonable business-like manner in planning social activities, money-making projects, and other class business throughout the year. Although we have had two groups, the class has met together – to discuss class business, to take trips to various places about Columbus, and to participate in other class affairs – often enough to maintain class harmony and minimize the feelings that accompany separation for the first time since they have been in University School

The core topic this quarter is Driver education. In general, we are concerned with the classroom and theoretical aspects of the problem in preparing for the actual driving instruction which comes during the eleventh grade. Specifically, we are investigating such topics as safety, insurance and legal aspects, the theory of internal combustion engines, geographical aspects, the automobile industry, and the history of the automobile.

Currently, we are laying our plans for a trip to Tar Hollow, Ohio which is scheduled for May 19 to May 22 inclusive and, it is hoped, will provide many worthwhile experiences not available in an indoor classroom environment. At Tar Hollow, in addition to the usual pleasure of a four-day camping trip, each student will have the opportunity to do some work on arts and crafts, astronomy, photography, surveying and mapping, and wild-life.

Bob has made very satisfactory progress in core during the present school year. He is becoming more and more adept in his command of language both written and spoken. His work is well-organized and reasonably complete and he usually meets his



responsibilities promptly. Academically, his diversity of interests and willingness to work seem to cause his greatest problems because he sometimes commits himself in so many different directions that he has difficulty fulfilling all his obligations as promptly as he himself would desire.

Bob is quite willing to work with others and accepts suggestions cheerfully, however, his self-assured manner and his desire to “get on with the job” sometimes gives others the impression that he wants to assume more authority than is due him.

Since the operetta rehearsals are particularly heavy right now, individual progress reports for chorus will be written some time after May 10. This letter should reach you during the month of May and will provide an evaluation of Bob’s work in chorus.

#### French I – Mr. Allen

Bob’s performance in the French assembly was excellent. He was able to interpret the spirit of a French village festival. His acting added much authenticity to the program.

In the winter quarter Bob’s scholastic work in French showed an improvement. I regret to report, however, that throughout this entire school year Bob has never worked up to capacity. His laziness and poor study habits are the cause of his slow progress. In the last report, I strongly recommended that Bob make a schedule which would provide him with sufficient time for daily study of French. Apparently he did not follow this advise. Very often this year he came to class unprepared or inadequately prepared. Consequently, his papers are filled with errors in spelling and grammar.

Bob’s best skill is his spoken French. He has much talent in language, but he has not been utilizing it.

If Bob wishes to elect the second year of French he will need to learn how to study. Since he has the ability to do superior work, I think it would be regrettable if he did not take advantage of the opportunities that are offered to him in this area.

Radio Speech – Miss Stewart

Bob continues to do excellent work in this area. He sometimes assumes more authority than he should but this is the result of interest and enthusiasm. I would recommend that he try out for school of the Air shows next year.

General Mathematics – Mr. Schaaf

Bob's work in mathematics has been very satisfactory all year. He hands in his assignments regularly, show he understands what he is doing, and is doing more than what is required to merely clear. I believe Bob has achieved his objectives in taking General Mathematics, namely improving his skill in arithmetic manipulation. Bob's class behavior has been good. I believe he would do average or better work in either Algebra II or in Nature of Proof.

Physical Education – Mr. Miner

Bob is currently participating with the track team as a shot putter. He is conscientious about practice and is a good group member. He has always been more than willing to share with others. He needs success in physical education activities and we would recommend more emphasis on leadership responsibilities for him.

Sincerely Yours,  
Robert M. Boyd  
Adrian Stilson  
TENTH GRADE COUNSELORS

## Spring Quarter

*Adrian H. Stilson,  
June 6, 1952*

Bob has successfully completed the tenth grade year. The counselors believe that the year has been profitable for the entire class. We recommend Bob for the eleventh grade.

The Tar Hollow trip was well planned and carried out. On their evaluations, the students rated most of their experiences as good or very good.

It has been a pleasant year and we are looking forward to next year.

Sincerely,  
Adrian H. Stilson  
TENTH GRADE COUNSELOR



## Grade Eleven



Eisenhower Inauguration – 1953  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

*1952-53*

Summers always seemed long to me. Perhaps it was the contrast between the busy schedule of school activities and a prolonged period of disengagement. Whatever it was I had already begun to notice a sense of loss when school came to an end in June. I did not yet understand why, nor did I know that most of my friends didn't share my deep engagement in school activities and personalities.

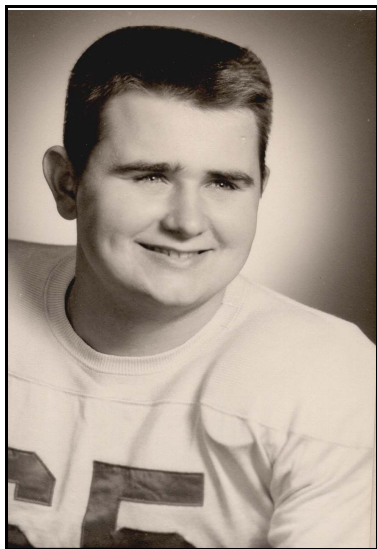
My plans for the summer centered on electronics. At the top of my list was for Kiefer and I to build new oscilloscopes. Once that was done I planned to begin construction on a radio studio I was planning for our new basement recreation room at home.

Although my interest in electronics had begun in the fifth grade, it was fast developing into a major activity. By the summer

of 1952 I had already mastered electron tube theory, and thanks to Kiefer, I was able to use RCA's giant Radio Engineer's Handbook to calculate signal gain, grid bias, and how to extract signals at different impedances by using the plate or cathode as signal source.

By that summer Kiefer and I had built electronic volt meters, audio tone generators, and a couple of high fidelity amplifiers. Along the way I came to learn about the intricacies of inductance, capacitance – and when we began to build radio transmitters, Kiefer helped me to wrap around the more obscure characteristics of tuned circuits – especially Q and reactance.

By the time I took the amateur radio exam, only the Morse Code part of the test was much of a challenge. Kiefer and I shared a great many other experiences – we both loved movies – so the time we spent together provided me a background in technology that underpinned a lifetime in technology development. Most important of all, what I learned in those years made my plan to become an electrical engineer a lesser priority.



Robert Butche,  
Right Tackle, Little Buckeyes  
1953-1954

### **Hot Summer**

With both my parents working that summer I was expected to contribute to keeping the household running. Not just mowing the grass and doing the laundry, but also by preparing dinner on weekday nights. Although I was already an experienced cook and baker, preparing large meals in a hot kitchen in what was one of the hottest summers Columbus had seen since 1936-1937 was challenging.

My maternal grandmother, the greatest pie maker I had ever known, had seen to it that I could equal her pie making skills. So, for most of the summer I was baking pies every few days, baking my own bread, and whatever else tempted me. Since our house was small, and the only table was in the tiny kitchen, my baking activities always added significantly to the temperature in the kitchen. Dinner in our kitchen, on a one hundred degree day, could be miserable if I failed to complete the baking in the morning.

### **Football is Hard Work**

My football career had been mediocre at best, so I decided to work out regularly to keep in shape that summer. Fortunately, one of my classmates, Jean Abernathy, who I dated from time to time, had moved nearby. Her father was Superintendent of the Ohio School for the Deaf. After over one hundred years in its original building downtown, the School For the Deaf built a beautiful new campus on the old golf course property along Morse Road at the end of Indianola Avenue – just four blocks away from where we lived.

I would dress in my running sweats and my cleated football shoes and then ride my bicycle over to the school grounds so I could run two to three miles. By the second day this was not just boring, but hard work. So I sauntered across the fields to



Mentors and Legends  
Coach Williams and John Ramseyer, Jr.  
University School Photo by Dave Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

the Superintendent's residence and visited with Jean, her brother Tom, and their little sister, Sondra.

I ran almost daily that summer – but even running in the mornings in the beastly July heat was far more discomfort and work than I wanted. To be good in football required being very aggressive and working through pain – neither of which seemed to me to be all that much fun.

When football practice started in the dog days of August, I was in better shape than I had ever been. Coach Williams, who found my lack of physical aggressiveness disappointing the previous year, moved me from tackle to center. I was good with my hands, and could handle the ball well, so in my junior year, I moved from third string right tackle to second string Center.

The University School football program was about a great deal more than athletics – for Bill Williams was an extraordinary man for whom character, self discipline and honesty were essential elements of success. His job may have been to coach us in football, but his mission was to teach us how to become responsible men in a competitive, sometimes brutal world.

No one, least of all me, would have expected someone of my limited abilities to go out for football at Ohio State. The Old Order Changeth – and in the doing life's opportunities multiply as destinies change.

### **Omnivorous Temptation**

When school began in the fall our class had two new teachers. Margaret Willis, who had been on the original faculty of the school in 1932, was fifty-two that year while Fred Schmieder, a new teacher in the school not yet twenty-six, was beginning his Ph.D. program. Fred Julius Schmieder possessed an engaging personality that included being deferential to his faculty colleagues. Although Schmieder's personality and style were vastly different from Willis, he was far better at communicating his thoughts and considerably more deft in his handling of young people. He was, however, no match for Willis' experience, or



intellect. Willis was a force to be reckoned with at University School. To avoid having to deal with one of the most difficult teachers in the school, I sought to be included in Fred Schmieder's section that year.

From the day school opened, my commitments in so many areas became an immediate problem. Some activities, including football, Junior Achievement, Radio Speech, and Chorus were important enough to me to build the remainder of my academic schedule around them. The problem was that taking Radio-Speech would amount to a second year in a one year elective – and one that offered no Carnegie credits and was not considered, by some on the faculty, as being academically meaningful.

Unfortunately, the science courses, Biology, Chemistry and Physics were all scheduled for the same time period as Radio Speech. Given that I was clearly on a path to college, the school was very concerned that I earn at least two units in science. Thanks to the involvement of Jane Stewart and Adrian Stilson, I was not forced into either science course.

Stilson may well have suggested that I was already too focused on science, especially physics. Stewart argued for me to continue in her class for a number of reasons. First, Bill and I were central figures in the developing success of her course. But by then my developing knowledge and experience in electronics had come to play an important role. I offered to rebuild the school's public address system which had never worked since being installed in 1932. Everyone but Jane Stewart seemed skeptical of my ability to undertake such a job, and others, including Margaret Willis thought that the two-way capabilities of such systems were an invasion of a teacher's privacy. No one, least of all me, understood the amount of time it would take me to re-engineer an incompletely installed PA system and make it operable – without spending any school money.



Jerrie Mock and Three-Eight Charlie

Photo: Columbus Dispatch

### Three-Eight Charlie

Bill and I were active in many other radio related activities that year including appearances on the college's School of the Air series on WOSU. WTVN, the last of Columbus' original television stations to go on-the-air, began a series of Sunday programs called *Youth Has Its Say*. I filled in one Sunday afternoon for another student who was ill. The program featured Columbus high school students discussing important issues of the day.

Channel Six was originally the DuMont Television network outlet in Columbus, although it would later affili-

ate with ABC. Edward Lamb, built the station for next to nothing and it showed. WTVN's studios in the Leveque Lincoln Tower were crammed into what had once been offices. The small studio and control room were on one of the lower floors while WTVN's transmitter and antenna were at the top of the fifty-two story building. The television studio had once been a small conference room. On one side was a window looking in on the adjacent control room. On the other side was a simple set consisting of a backdrop, a sofa and two armchairs. In the middle were two cameras, only one of which was turned on to reduce costs. Behind the camera, was the producer. The announcer was in the tiny control room. The lights were hot, and the studio was stuffy, yet the excitement in the air was electrifying for an eleventh grader eager to be a broadcaster.

I was more articulate than the students from the other schools that afternoon which caught the attention of the show's young producers, Russell and Geraldine ( Jerrie ) Mock. The first show went well enough that I was invited back many times for the live Sunday broadcasts. Along the way, I got to know Russell and Jerrie Mock as broadcasters – having no sense at all that they were avid aviators, or for that matter, that Jerrie was a very courageous adventurer. On reflection, it is clear that the Mocks were breaking ground in a new media as a shared adventure. The *Youth Has Its Say* adventure was only the beginning for Jerrie Mock.

In 1953 I had no idea that my first career would be in aviation, nor for that matter, that aviation would be the focus of Jerrie Mock's life. Nor might I have imagined that I would meet and work with the Mocks later in life when I would oversee the installation of avionics equipment in Jerrie's Cessna Skywagon, *The Spirit of Columbus*. If successful, Jerrie Mock would become the first woman to fly solo around the world.

Life unravels in strange ways, yet my two associations with the Mocks, some twelve years apart, were both educational.



The Spirit of Columbus  
Photo: Smithsonian Institution

It was a strange twist of fate that introduced me to the Mocks in 1953. Although I never sensed that Jerrie Mock was an adventurer, neither did I even remotely think that I too would be drawn to experiences and worlds beyond my youthful imagination.

Although adventurers are rare in life, they are among the most interesting people to know. Jerrie Mock, was one of them.

Just twelve years later, on the morning of March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1964, I watched Jerrie take-off in *Three-Eight Charlie*, for her historic solo flight around the world. Although few of us watched her departure from Port Columbus that morning, as many as three thousand cheering fans, FAA officials, and news cameras, welcomed her home twenty-nine days and some 22,960 miles later when she returned to Port Columbus on the evening of April 17, 1964.

Although few saw, and none remember, the television shows we did on those Sunday afternoons in 1952, Jerrie's position in aviation history is assured. Best of all, good old Three-Eight Charlie hangs prominently in the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, in Washington.

### **The Art of the Commercial**

In our second year in the Junior Achievement program, Bill, Dick and Bob learned about the money side of broadcasting. Our advisors from WBNS-TV had not been happy with our first year on television. Chuck Cady, who had to come in to work on Saturday's to direct our fifteen minute program felt the sales results we were getting from our commercials for some of the other JA companies wasn't worth the time and effort. The station's Public Affairs director, John Cox, agreed and that settled the matter.

When Dick, Bill and I showed up for a second year in Junior Achievement we again chose to participate in the television program. What no doubt seemed a minor change to our advisors was a major disappointment to Bill and me. The new program would run five days a week in the early evening between 7:00 and

7:30 – prime time in 1950s television. The program would not be ours, for it was on film. The bad news for Bill and Bob was that the new format had no on-air opportunities.

Instead, our JA company would only sell and write the commercials for the other JA companies who sought to advertise their products. Bill and I were not happy campers, but we pitched in and learned a great deal about the commercial side of television. Being the writer meant that I was assigned the task of creating a suitable sales pitch for a wide range of Junior Achievement products and services. My teacher would be John Cox, who had neither the time nor the patience of University School faculty.

In his regular job, John Cox created, wrote and scheduled the non-commercial announcements common in broadcasting prior to the deregulation of radio and television stations during the Reagan administration. He insisted that I prepare a list of essential points and develop a format for a television commercial in much the same way he had earlier demanded that I first conceive a format for a program. The results were commercials at near professional quality for our JA company customers.

In the 1950's television was growing by leaps and bounds. In little more than three years, the percentage of Columbus homes owning television sets was already eighty-percent. There were only three stations in Columbus in 1952 which meant that the prime time hours from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m. garnered very large audiences. Where our old Saturday afternoon program was seen by no more than ten-percent of viewers, the evening time slot provided our JA company advertisers with nearly half of the viewing audience. The results were significantly higher sales for the JA companies who bought our commercials.

By the end of the second year, most of the high school students in our JA company were familiar faces at the TV station. To my delight, Bill and I, and a few others, were invited to participate in occasional on-air activities that year. For me, being around the television station was exciting and filled with wonder,

so I was often there over the weekends, or, as Joe Holbrook well remembers in the evenings during network programming.

There were three permanent sets in Studio-A that year. The north end of the studio, nearest the large control room window, had the daily program sets. On the east side of the studio was the set for *Looking With Long*, the gas company sponsored evening news program. Across from it was the kitchen set where the cooking

programs originated. At the south end of the studio was where *Columbus Town Meeting* originated on Sunday afternoons.

Sometimes in the evening, I would go down to the station to visit with Joe Holbrook, and a new air-personality who had come to WBNS-TV from Dayton. Holbrook was at the station in the evenings to prepare for the live commercials and weather segments for the 11 p.m. news. Sometimes Don Riggs was there in the evenings, and, often as not, so was the young man from



Johnny Winters Gamboree, ca. 1953

Photo: WBNS-TV

Dayton – John Winters.

While the world went on around us, the men talked, joked and occasionally played cards. I tried my best to be one of the adults, but I didn't fool anyone. Needless to say, Johnny Winters was irrepressible and always funny. Best of all his stories and anecdotes were often acted out with gesticulation, mouth noises and strange voices.

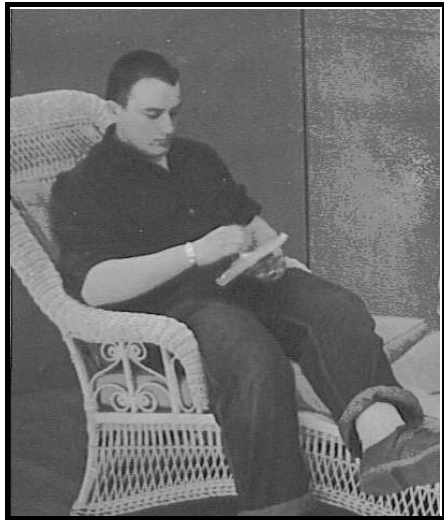
One night Johnny Winters was totally out of control, leaving the rest of us in cascades of laughter as he became Maudie Frickert and lambasted us for nearly everything imaginable. By Saturday night, when Johnny's weekend musical variety program, *Gamboree*, aired at 11 pm, Maudie was part of his repertoire. Winters didn't last long at channel ten, for his humor and frenetic performances were outside the staid standards of that era. Maudie Frickert, on the other hand, will live forever.

### **Buckboard and Academics**

In winter quarter, when the University School PA system was back in operation, the Radio-Speech class began a weekly broadcast to the entire upper school. The Monday morning program was mostly school news and announcements, so we called it Buckboard. Before long, Dick Evans and others suggested we might broadcast a pop music program into some rooms during lunch hour. No matter all of these diversions, my interest in academics was growing as well.

Our core topic in Autumn quarter was Geography and Current World Problems. The Korean War had been in the news for many months so I chose to focus my studies on Korea. Core was perhaps at the bottom of my interests – and my work showed it.

One of my new courses, originated at University School by famed mathematician-scholar Harold Fawcett, really caught my atten-



Richard H. Evans – ca 1952

tion. The course was called *The Nature of Proof*, and it was taught by one of the most creative and engaging math teachers in America, Eugene P. Smith. The course got its name from the requirement that problems were not only solved, but that the student could prove the validity of the solution.

Although Nature of Proof was about plane geometry, it was taught as an exercise in deductive reasoning and how one could apply logic to solving problems of every kind and nature. For a mathematics course, it was unusual for there was no commercial text book. Instead, Smith's students built our own geometry books as we progressed by collecting our own proofs of theorems. What we learned was far more than geometric shapes and expressions, for Eugene Smith helped us to apply the logical reasoning methods we were using in geometry to the resolution of problems in the non-geometric domain in which we all lived. As a result, what I learned in Gene Smith's course influenced my decision making throughout my life.

### **Satchmo at The Palm Garden**

Largely thanks to the efforts of Mary Tolbert, my interests in music began to broaden considerably. I still preferred the popular music of that era, but I had also begun to listen to classical music – much to the consternation of my parents. Although I had discovered a new style of musical expression in Chorus, I had little exposure to jazz. That changed one cold winter night when Kiefer called to tell me his dad had arranged for us to get into the Palm Garden night club to hear Louis Armstrong. He didn't have to tell me who Armstrong was, for I had heard him many times on the radio.

"Louie's one of my dad's friends," Kiefer explained, "so we can get into the night club and see the show."

While I knew that Mel Newman had an extensive collection of Louis Armstrong recordings, I also knew that Kiefer had not previously exhibited much interest in music. Still, the invitation to invade an adults-only night club had a certain appeal, so I agreed



to go along. Especially when I learned that the first show began at ten-thirty. On Friday night, Kief and I went to the Palm Garden nightclub on High Street, near King Avenue.

When we went inside, we were not seated in the audience, for that was forbidden by Ohio Law at the time. Instead, we were shown into Armstrong's dressing room. Louis called Kiefer by name, and then introduced himself to me. He was a somewhat squat man, in his early fifties, and balding. His face was round, his smile wide, and his manner of speaking – part Cajun, part southern black patois, and part New York English, came together in a melange of strange sounds peppered with expletives, bawdy language, and frequent laughter. He was sweating profusely that night, frequently mopping his brow with a large white handkerchief – all the while holding his trumpet against his rotund abdomen. I was totally enchanted – largely because he was treating Kiefer and me as adults – and speaking to us in the salty language of a New Orleans brothel.



Louis Armstrong  
The Father of New Orleans Jazz

For perhaps an hour, Armstrong regaled us with stories, anecdotes and observations about his life, his music, and a long list of famous people he knew ranging from Bing Crosby to Kid Ory. The stories we heard that night were priceless – not just for their scatological humor, but equally for their educational content for two young men who knew little or nothing about the south, American Musical history, or the treatment of blacks in the south.

Louis told us he was from New Orleans – from a poor family. I was surprised when he told us he had been sent to reform school when he was twelve for having fired a gun in the air on New Year's Eve. Everybody had to learn something at the school, and he said he chose to play cornet. Unfortunately, when he was released, at age fourteen, the cornet stayed behind. To support himself, he said he sold papers, unloaded boats, and even sold coal. He loved music, and not yet owning an instrument himself, he went to clubs to hear the local bands. Although he liked Funky Butt Hall, someone neither Kiefer or I had ever heard of, his favorite was Joe "King" Oliver. It was Oliver, he told us who took an interest in him – even giving him his first cornet. Later, Armstrong told us, he played in an Oliver band at cat-houses in New Orleans' Storyville section. His rich, often obscene, descriptions of the activities in New Orleans brothels that night both titillated and embarrassed the two innocent white boys who hung on his every word.

When Armstrong left New Orleans to join a band in St. Louis his life changed. That was when he began to play, what he called *gigs*, in Kid Ory's band. When he said he returned to New Orleans, I wondered if it was to get back into the cat-house action.

"Naw," he exclaimed, "too many of them cats was coming down with the tenderloins and dying. An' I wasn't ready to die for a little pussy. No-sir, I went back to N'awlins to play in parades and stuff."

At ten-thirty the first show began. The Palm Garden was filled to capacity that night with a largely white audience. Kiefer and I were seated just off stage where we could take in all of the action and hear New Orleans and St. Louis style jazz up close, and very personal. After about an hour, Armstrong came off stage and continued our conversation as if it had never been interrupted. We spoke about the music that night and I began to ask questions about its origin. Armstrong's answers to my questions were long and detailed – and relied on knowledge of places I did not know, and people I had never heard of.

There were three shows that night. By the time the last show was over at 2:30 a.m. I was an enthusiastic aficionado of Dixieland music, and Armstrong's unique sound. Neither Kiefer nor I would ever have a love of dixieland jazz even close to his dad's love for it, but we were to meet Louis several more times – including the night Mel Newman hosted the entire band, and many of his friends for an all night party at the big house on Coventry Road.

### **Junior Achievement**

My experiences in Junior Achievement in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade inspired me to promote the opportunity to others at University School. Among them, my radio-Speech classmates Dick Evans and Bill McCormick enrolled in the television company in our Junior year. With three people from the same high school class, we effectively took over leadership in the JA company that year. Dick was immediately made the business manager and treasurer. Bill, with his flair for entertaining and professional broadcasting skills became our principal on-air spokesman. And best of all, I got to serve the role I liked most, being Bossy Bob and chief salesman.

We had a great year together – so successful that we would all enroll again in our Senior year. Our success was noteworthy enough that I was nominated for the JA salesman of the year award. The judges, William Popp, Hugh Stickel and Bill Paul were from the Chamber of Commerce's Sales Executive club. They not only selected me for the award, but also approved entering me in the National Junior Achievement sales competition to be held in Chicago in June. One of Columbus' best known radio personalities of that era, Paula McGuire, who played the role of Betty Newton for the Gas Company on WBNS, presented me with the award.

The trip to Chicago, my first airline trip, was part of a three day event that included speech making, sales demonstrations, and for me, appearing on Don McNeil's Breakfast Club ABC network radio program and a DuMont television network noon hour television program.

### **A Matter of Character**

One afternoon that spring I was called to Margaret Willis' office on the third floor. Like many of my classmates, and some of the faculty, I avoided Miss Willis. At seventeen, I had little understanding of what she stood for, or for that matter, what I stood for. She was a puzzle to me, and given her demanding personality and reputation, she was someone I sought to avoid.

When I arrived at her office, I couldn't help but notice the piles of papers strewn all over her desk. I foolishly thought her to be untidy, absent any understanding that she knew what was there and when each task was to be completed. At first, I was relieved that she didn't want to speak to me about academics, for her reputation for pushing the more gifted students, was not something I wanted to test. The problem she wanted to discuss with me was social. She had noticed that I had yet to arrange for a date to the Senior Prom just a few weeks away.

When I confirmed that I had no date as yet, she proposed

that I consider a new girl in our class. She confided in me that the young woman in question had not had a date for any of the dances or events at school that year. The girl in question was not someone I would have considered inviting to a dance. I would have chosen someone I had known for some time, possibly Millicent Ramey, Ellen Doan, Jean Abernathy or Helen Larcomb. Now, here I was being asked to invite someone I saw only as being a needful wallflower.



Margaret Willis – c 1950  
Photo: OSU Archives

No matter my reluctance, Margaret Willis was very persuasive. She played on all my strings. I was mature, popular, an athlete, a good student, and looked up to.

I was vain enough to know that when I was around the freshmen girls they would giggle and, so I thought, swoon. According to Margaret Willis all I had to do was invite this girl to the Prom and it would change her life. Willis persisted until I gave in and agreed to her plan. Then, she confided, "And of course you cannot tell anyone about our conversation." The next morning I located the girl and invited her to the prom. She immediately accepted.

She obtained a beautiful gown for the Prom. I responded by getting her a large orchid corsage. There was a problem however, for I was not to pick her up. She would meet me at the dance. When the night arrived, the date was horrible. She did not dance well, and we had so little in common that there was little or no conversation. Worst of all, some others treated us as if we were a couple – something I would never have considered. As the evening progressed, my lack of maturity, and insincerity increasingly made me miserable.

I stayed with it, and even agreed to having our photograph taken as a remembrance of what should have been a memorable evening for both of us. I was so miserable it showed, and no matter my previous good intentions, my behavior was such that I no doubt ruined the evening for her as well. When the dance was over, she left as suddenly as she had arrived. In a moment of relief at being free, I destroyed the photographs as well. I don't believe either of us ever spoke to one another again. Worst of all, the matter was frequently discussed among other students who taunted me for having been deemed to have dated someone so unworthy that it had made me a laughing stock among my own peers. At the end of the school year the girl withdrew from the school.

Margaret Willis was furious with me. My pain was inconsequential in her opinion, for I could do anything I wanted in life. Women, on the other hand, Willis reminded me, were

relegated to waiting for some man to engage them socially, or romantically. Margaret Willis had asked of me only to bring some joy into another's life – and at that I had failed miserably.

Although my pain at the outcome was to last for weeks, my pain was over my own loss of face. I was far too engaged feeling sorry for myself to consider how deeply and unnecessarily I had hurt someone else.

It would take many years for me to understand that talking about ethics, having honorable intentions, and being mature were merely illusions. Being of good and consistent character was beyond me at seventeen – and it would be many years before I would come of age as a responsible adult one afternoon in the Flanders Fields of Belgium where I would come face-to-face with death.



University School Boys Fellowship Club – STAG – 1952

Back Row: Mr. Schaaf, John Hummer, Tom Fort, Dick Batchelor, Scott Buller,  
Jim Butts, Bobby Woodruff, Mark Hopkins, Keith Bemis,  
Pete Diehl, Bill McCormick, Keith Lysle Mr. Miner.

Middle Row: Dick Evans, Jon Martin, Ronnie Ward, Eugene Price,  
Norman Younkman, Walt Reckless, Keith Gayer, Jerry Rardon, Bob Butche,  
Jack Williams, David Coplon, Tom Lowe.

Front Row: Larry Boley, Charles Minshall, Don Crosley, Waldo Tyler, John  
Strong,  
Harry Hummer, Jim Renken, John Frye, Chuck Haines,  
Gil Haas, Don Ferguson





## Eleventh Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Margaret Willis,  
Fred Schmieder,  
January 21, 1953*

Early in the fall quarter, both sections of the eleventh grade core selected the following two problem areas for study: Geography and Current World Problems and Colleges and Vocations, of which the latter will be taken up in a week or so.

The students in both sections began their work last quarter with an introductory unit on world geography and are now nearing completion of the unit's work on Current World Problems. Although both sections worked independently, both engaged in frequent map work, discussions, and the writing of a term paper on a problem of interest and concern to the individual student.

A good deal of the core time was used for class business, which consisted of discussing and planning various social and money-making activities.

Bob's work in core is consistently very good. His chief weakness, it seems, is meeting deadlines, although this matter is not too serious a problem with him. Bob's reading skills are developed to a remarkable degree; and, although he has great difficulty with spelling, his writing reflects maturity of thought and correctness of form.

Bob takes great pains in doing a thorough job. I am certain that his term paper on Korea, which is nearing completion, will be a noteworthy result of many weeks of effortful research, planning, and writing.

Possessing rather markedly such enviable traits as dependability, sense of responsibility, and insight, Bob at times reflects some impatience with those who do not have the same level of understanding as he. Usually, however, he is a most cooperative person who is achieving really successful results in his core work.

### French II – Mrs. Woodruff

The aims in French II are to increase fluency in speaking the language and to gain greater proficiency in reading both intensively and extensively. Our textbook, L'Ami Bob, with its story of a French boy and its interesting explanations of French life and customs, provides rich material for group discussion. Bob, although hampered at times by incomplete lesson preparation, participates freely in this phase of our study. His accent is good and his comprehension is improving quite rapidly.

During the autumn quarter each student read two extra books, making oral reports of them in French, one to the class and one individually to me. Bob seems to enjoy this type of assignment and could, if he were to improve his accuracy, become quite proficient.

Several worksheets and tests on verbs and vocabulary quizzes were completed in order to achieve greater accuracy and understanding. Bob's first attempt show a lack of study, but the retakes were successful. Unless pushed by necessity, I feel that Bob will take an easy way out. This could arise from the fact that he gets too involved in too many outside projects.

We are now in the midst of our annual French Festival, this year based on that northwestern section of France called Brittany. Bob is a willing and active participant in this enterprise, and has made pertinent suggestions and contributions.

Bob should have a successful year in French II.

Radio -Speech – Miss Stewart

The radio speech class this quarter is emphasizing interviewing, dramatic writing, and producing the school radio show, Buckshot.

Bob continues to be an outstanding student. He is eager to discover new opportunities to learn new experiences. He has exhibited his initiative in overhauling the sound wagon and in reconditioning the school P.A. system. In addition to this and his work for Buckshot, Bob will undoubtedly be used on School of the Air shows.

Student Publications – Mr. Boyd

Bob's writing for the newspaper is satisfactory and shows evidence of interest and initiative. He writes for the newspaper in a manner similar to radio script work. After several discussions, he has been showing improvement in making his writing more direct and forceful.

As photography editor for the yearbook, Bob faces many problems of securing the needed photographic materials. With his experience and ability in photography he will find the job challenging.

Nature of Proof – Mr. Smith

In this class we have been particularly concerned with the nature of deductive proof and its implications, not only in geometry but also in everyday living. The roles of definitions, assumptions, undefined terms and previously proved propositions are considered in both mathematical and non-mathematical contexts. The nature of reasoning with its power, its fallacies, and its proper use is studied and applied. This class has been a very cooperative group, and they have made very satisfactory progress.

Bob has been a pleasant, courteous, and cooperative student. He has shown a great deal of interest in and enthusiasm for the activities of this class and his achievement has been very satisfactory. During class discussions he is attentive, and he

frequently contributes his ideas to them. In supervised study periods he generally works quietly and efficiently. The papers which he turns in are neat, well organized, complete, and reasonably accurate.

If Bob continues to display the same interest and enthusiasm, and if he continues to apply himself diligently to his tasks, he should finish the year with a very satisfactory record of achievement.

Football – Mr. Williams

Bob has been showing steady progress in learning the fundamentals of line play. He is a good student of the game in general. His interest goes beyond the mere playing of the game. He is to be commended for the favorable notices he received from the brochure that he developed. Bob is one of the leading candidates for a position on the team next year, and he can make sure of gaining this status by being consistently aggressive in line play. Due to Bob's physical maturity and favorable mastery of techniques, the matter of aggressiveness seems to be the only thing that stands in his way of becoming an outstanding lineman. He is cooperative and his fine attitude contributes toward good morale and enjoyment of the game.

Physical Education – Mr. Miner

During the time when eleventh grade reports were being written, Mr. Miner was out of town on pressing personal business. If there is any strong reason, in his judgement, for a physical education report on your son at this time, it will be sent separately in a few days. Otherwise you may assume that his progress is at least reasonably satisfactory.

Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Willis  
Fred Schmieder  
ELEVENTH GRADE COUNSELORS

## Winter Quarter – Cover Letter

*Margaret Willis,  
Fred Schmieder,  
March 20, 1953*

The eleventh grade students have been asked to write their own winter quarter progress reports. They have been given a chance to correct the mechanical errors in their evaluations, but otherwise the attached letter is typed as written. The students understood this, and also that the counselor would add his comments in this covering letter.

Bob's report required but a few corrections and those in spelling and capitalization. I feel, however, that his report deals too much with what the particular classes are engaged in rather than with the progress he has made with respect to his skills, habits, and attitudes. Many of the standards for judging that were set up are not even touched upon in his report. Bob is usually much more thorough in his work than his self-evaluation report indicates.

Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Willis  
Fred Schmieder  
ELEVENTH GRADE COUNSELORS

## Winter Quarter – Self Report

*Robert Butche,  
March 20, 1953*

### Nature of Proof – Mr. Smith

I think my progress in this class has ben very good. I find the study of geometry interesting and fun. I like to do many of the constructions and other activities associated with this class. I try to make my work neat and accurate. I find once in a while though that I let my homework drag a little bit, but I'm trying to overcome this fault.

### Core – Mr. Schmieder

My topic of study that past quarter in core was The Korean War. I worked on this subject for a long period of time and came up with what I though was a good term paper. We made studies of vocations we might be interested in and I chose Electrical Engineering. We also took the OSPE or the Ohio State Psychological Examination. This is a test that helps to predict your grades in college. I scored a B on this test and was very proud of it.

### School Publications – Mr. Boyd

I find School Publications interesting and enjoyable. I worked on the Yearbook staff in the position of Photography editor. I was the only Junior on the Scarleteer staff this year. I like to write for Buckaroo and enjoy working with the other kids in the class.

### Radio-Speech – Miss Stewart

This, I think, is my favorite class. I like to do many outside and extra-curricular activities. I worked on fixing up the all-school public address system. I've helped plan and write some of the Buckshot programs. I'm also director of some of our special service programs that we broadcast to some of the other classes.

French II – Mrs. Woodruff

French II is definitely one of the classes I find I don't do my best in. Sometimes I find it hard to keep up with the group and at other times I find myself leading. Judging myself, though, I would say I could do better if I applied myself more.

Physical Education – Mr. Miner

Physical Education is one of the classes where you cannot accurately judge yourself. I think, though, that my attitude towards the class has improved and my general physical ability is improving.

## Spring Quarter - Cover Letter

*Margaret Willis,  
Fred Schmieder,  
June, 1953*

This is the final report on Bob's progress in the eleventh grade. All his teachers in writing it have kept in mind that we must not only evaluate him in relation to his own rate of progress, but that we must also note what gains he needs to make if he is to be ready for graduation in another year, and for college entrance after graduation. All eleventh graders were recently given an achievement test in mathematics, the score of which will be used as a basis for counseling as to senior electives in mathematics.

If there are any special recommendation for work which your child needs to do during the summer months, we hope you will help him plan his time so that he can get the work done. Such suggestions in this report are distinct from clearance requirements which relate only to unfinished work in courses taken this year.

With best wishes for a pleasant summer,

Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Willis  
Fred Schmieder  
Eleventh Grade Counselors



## Spring Quarter – Final Report

*Margaret Willis,  
Fred Schmieder,  
June, 1953*

### Core – Mr. Schmieder

A great deal of time during the spring quarter has been devoted to planning for and working on the Junior-Senior Prom. Parallel with this has been the selection of a class play to present in the fall. The unit has been a geographical study of the United States with special attention to possible senior trip destinations other than New York. A great deal of data has been assembled which will be reviewed and summarized as school opens next fall. In addition each student has done a regular amount of free or creative writing and a small amount of tool writing. All students are expected to carry on a program of leisure reading, and special attention has been given to helping students who need to improve in their reading habits and skills.

Bob has continued to do good work in core this quarter. His writing has been of fine quality, and he has done sufficient reading, I feel, to enable him to maintain the high reading level he has established for himself.

Bob is cooperative, conscientious, and friendly and is usually prompt in turning in his assignments, even though he is sometimes rather hard pressed for time because of his interests and work in radio and television. The one piece of work in which Bob could have improved this quarter was his report on Chicago in connection with the geographical study of the United States. I feel, however, that this inadequacy on his part was due to a misunderstanding of the assignment rather than anything else.

Bob has definite ability in speaking and announcing and can, I feel, look forward to some measure of success in these areas should he decide to do advanced work in them. He can, at any rate,

look forward with assurance to his senior year and graduation if he continues to make the progress that he is currently making in his work.

French II – Mrs. Woodruff

Bob's progress in French II has been quite consistent and self-motivated. He participates very freely in class discussions, but is somewhat hampered by absences and tardiness resulting from other activities. He has, however, developed a good comprehension of whatever he hears, reads or expresses in French. I urge the inclusion of French III in his schedule next year.

The indication in his general attitudes and accomplishments are that, with another year of steady growth, he will be well prepared to handle problems and challenges contingent upon graduation from high school.

Student Publications – Mr. Boyd

During the year the class produced five successful issues of Buckaroo and an outstanding yearbook. In addition each person in the class has completed other assignments relating to editorials, front-page news, and feature writing. By next fall we hope to have in final form a student handbook which a committee from the class has worked hard to prepare.

Throughout the year Bob has worked conscientiously and effectively. Upon occasion the press of other activities causes him to miss assignments and turn in his material after the deadline. This lacking of punctuality is not a habit, but occurs rather often, particularly since he has been doing the noon disc-jockey show.

Bob's writing has shown steady improvement during the year and should be very adequate for next year. He expresses ideas clearly and thinks creatively.

Radio-Speech – Miss Stewart

The radio speech class has completed the fifth and last of its half hour broadcasts over WOSU. In addition to this the class

has produced a thirty minute tape for the American history class, broadcasted over the school PA system every Monday morning, and many students have worked on School of the Air shows.

Bob has made excellent use of class time and given many extra hours to this area. He has exhibited unusual initiative, drive, and maturity. He has shown definite progress in developing desirable leadership techniques. This quarter Bob has acted as producer for the American history taping, appeared on a number of TV shows, acted regularly on School of the Air shows, renovated the school PA system, and helped countless school organizations who needed “visual aid” assistance. In view of his interest in this field as a vocation, it is to be hoped that Bob’s schedule next year will allow him to again elect this class. With his interest and initiative it could continue to be a very worthwhile experience.

#### Nature of Proof – Mr. Smith

Bob has continued to show the fine attitudes in this class that were described in the first report this year. Except for a lapse during part of the winter quarter, the quality of his work has been maintained on a very satisfactory level. Bob thinks logically, and he is able to express his thoughts clearly.

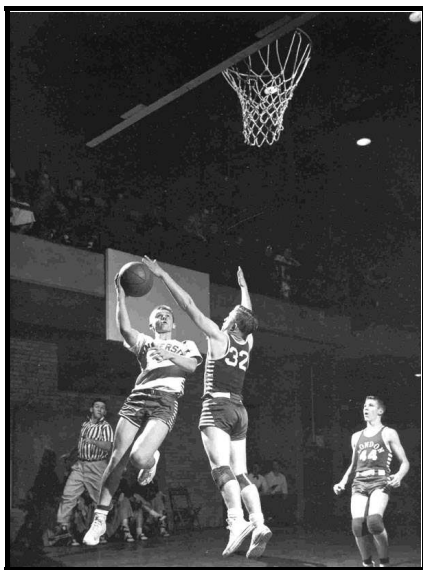
Bob’s record of achievement in this area for the year has been very satisfactory.

#### Physical Education – Mr. Miner

Bob has attended class sporadically due to his responsibilities in other areas. He has always been a good participant when in attendance. Bob is well accepted by the group as a hard worker, but rarely as a leader. We have hopes that he will continue to work on his physical development, as well as maintain a diversity of program and a willingness to be considerate and hardworking.



## Grade Twelve



Jack Williams vs. West Jefferson - 1954  
University School Photo by David Curl  
OSU Archives

*1953-1954*

In the spring of 1953 my dad bought his first new car since his 1937 Ford. Dad was definitely a Ford man all of his life, so it was no surprise that the new car was a Ford Galaxy. What was surprising was that dad bought Ford's newest options: automatic transmission, power steering and electric windows. It was the most beautiful car I had ever seen – but then it was also the first new car I had ever seen. Dad let me drive it that day, and for one short moment we shared something together.

It wasn't that dad didn't care about me or what was happening in my life, but rather that he couldn't relate to me, or understand my interests or aspirations. Dad's life focused on his siblings, his job, his lodge related activities and sports – especially

the Cincinnati Reds. He was interested in the University School Football team, but disappointed that I wasn't a better player.

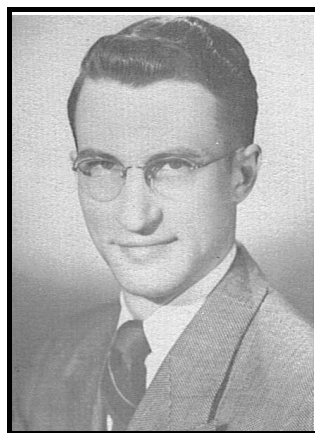
It was my mother that wanted me to achieve – and although she saw little value in most of what I chose to do, she encouraged me to expand my interests and horizons.

### **Dick and Bob – Publishers**

In a moment of sheer insanity, I proposed to Dick Evans that we upgrade the University School Football Press Kit. Traditionally the press kit consisted of a listing of players and their numbers hand written by Coach Williams and typed onto a hectograph master. It was the bare minimum and it was embarrassingly little compared to the other schools in our league. We were the big time school in the city, while the other schools were largely the only high school in small towns in adjacent counties. So, while football was an interesting diversion in the laboratory school setting, it was a matter of pride and importance in towns like West Jefferson, Mechanicsburg, and rural schools such as Berne Union.

Perhaps as a result of what we had learned in the school publications class, Dick Evans and I offered to produce a first class press kit for the Little Buckeyes football team. The problems were many. One of us was disposed to careful attention to detail and the other was prone to constantly reinventing the project and extending it in scope and quality. The result would have been predictable to anyone less determined to do a job of which we would be proud – and possibly honored.

At the onset it looked like a two week job, but on the advice of Bob Boyd, Dick and I began to get organized in July – nearly a month



Robert Boyd – ca 1950



University School aerial in 1957  
Tower Room was only room on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.  
Photo: OSU Archives

before we would begin our summer two-a-day practice sessions. Dick was a master of everything relating to office work – especially high speed typing and using a sometimes finicky mimeograph machine. I was the master of promotion who arranged for us to work in one of the most unseen parts of the University School building – the room inside the large tower atop the building.

For days, we worked in the hot summer heat – organizing, planning, and designing. We made errors that required re-work, and at such times I usually wanted to change what we were doing to make it even better. Better it may have been, but it was also increasing the workload for Dick. When typographical errors were detected, I wanted Dick to start over again. Then we decided to add some artistic elements, fancy headline type, and finally to replace a side staple binding with a spiral binding that required using a new tool – and changing the margins on pages already finished.

As the project grew in complexity and detail, football season began, and in late September, so did school. Still, Dick and I were working feverishly to complete the job. When we finished the job, we had produced the best football brochure in the league – something of which we were very proud, if not exactly timely.

Dick Evans did a spectacular job – and although my efforts greatly complicated the project and added considerably to his work load, he never complained. We were in it together, and we glowed in its success. My teachers, and possibly Dick's, were not at all happy with the class time we lost to finishing the football brochure. One of them was my new core teacher and counselor, Margaret Willis.

### **Discovering The Goose**

In the fall of 1953, I was very disappointed to learn that Margaret Willis was to become our senior class teacher and counselor. My disastrous experiences with her the previous year only served to increase my sense of foreboding when school began. It wasn't that I disliked Margaret Willis, for I had no reason for doing so. The problem was that she was a massive authority figure in the school, and I was highly prone to being a free spirit with considerable skills of persuasion and sufficient imagination to find loopholes in most any situation.

Although other teachers at University School sometimes had less than flattering nicknames amongst the student body, no one had as many, or as unflattering nicknames as Margaret Willis. Students spoke of her as *Atila The Hun*, or, more commonly simply as *The Goose*, a term meant to be derisive of her physical condition and to some degree recognition of her dominance in the school. She certainly didn't deserve to be so derisively identified by her students – nor would she admit to being least bit put off by it. No matter what this woman was called, she was a jewel.





Student Council Meeting, 1952  
University School Photo by David Curl  
Photo: OSU Archives

“You’ve got to expect young people to behave as young people,” was her attitude. At the core of Margaret Willis was a person that could disregard the seventeen-year-old temporarily in charge of our lives and focus on what we would be, or could become, as adults.

My year under Margaret Willis’ thumb would be difficult at best. Her efforts to mature me, make me narrow my focus and force me to accept responsibility and accountability far beyond what I wanted would not be easy for me, nor her, as it turned out. In my life, only OSU football coach Woody Hayes would have a greater impact on my life.

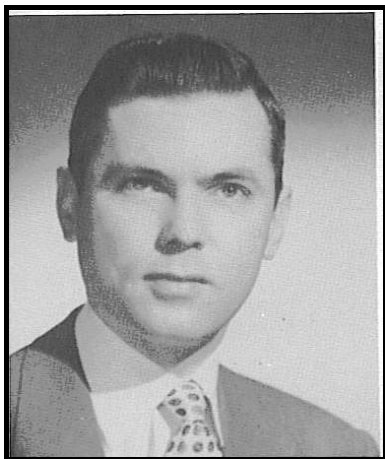
### **Promise Little – Deliver More**

My dealings with Margaret Willis got off on the wrong foot because of my outside commitments – especially the Football Brochure which Willis felt was being considerably overdone, and largely unnecessary. With my skills and abilities, I knew I could

almost always get my own way, and by my senior year my self-confidence was very high. Worse yet, I had made a habit of maneuvering Fred Schmieder the year before, which Willis had both recognized and sought to end. By the time I showed up in Willis' core class the first day of my senior year, I was a marked young man.

My plan for my senior year was to do a great deal of everything I liked or was interested in. Football, Radio-Speech, Chorus, dances, paper drives, and whatever else caught my fancy. Margaret Willis' plans were far different. As I would learn much later, when we became adult friends nearly two decades later, Willis saw two things in me at age seventeen that interested her. First, were my considerable talents and abilities. Then, there was my immaturity and propensity to mis-direct those talents. One need only compare Fred Schmieder's last parent report letter in my junior year with Margaret Willis' perception of my poor performance in her class section little more than four months later. While she was not at all happy with my token efforts in her American History class, she was even more unhappy that I was at best only minimally involved in the Senior Mathematics class.

Willis tried to get my attention, but I wasn't listening. At issue was the growing gap between what I promised and what I delivered. When I failed to respond, she backed off. I thought I had outlasted her – a most foolish notion for someone of my limited experience and maturity. About a week before end-of-quarter clearance, she spoke to me again. Although I had picked up the pace and was keeping up on home study assign-



Fred Schmieder – ca 1952

ments, I hadn't fulfilled my obligations for outside work in the first month of school. My options, she said, were to do all of that work now in which case I would clear as required. Or, I could work at school during the Christmas holidays to catch up. Then of course, she explained, I could simply repeat my senior year until I was mature enough to do what I had agreed to do.

With that, Margaret Willis had my attention. For two weeks, I worked long into the night catching up in core, senior mathematics and Willis' American History. I barely made it, but I did clear on schedule – and with a new understanding of the difference between a commitment and anything less.

Early in winter quarter, Margaret Willis had me in for another counseling session. She praised my writing, for which she said I clearly had a gift. To help me sharpen my writing skills, she said she was going to begin marking up my papers and reports using college standards. Once I was filled with a sense of superiority, she added, "And you're far too bossy. Being Vice President of the class doesn't make you the boss of anything."

### **TV Star**

Bill McCormick, Dick Evans and I were all involved in Junior Achievement again that year. While I grew weary of writing and timing commercial scripts, the JA television company continued to provide all of us ongoing access to the activities at Channel Ten. Although I was crushed one day when Joe Holbrook told me I would never make it in television because my voice wasn't sufficiently low pitched, others at the station saw other qualities. It was Bill who had the dulcet announcer's voice that year, and it was he that Holbrook groomed for on-air opportunities.

Well before the Christmas Holidays, Warren Parkinson, then Executive Director of Columbus' Junior Achievement operations, told me he had been asked if I would consider serving as a JA spokesman for the Christmas Seals campaign that benefited the Tuberculosis Society. The plan was to promote Junior Achievement through having one of the participants serve as a



TV Personality  
Bill McCormick in Cowboy Costume  
at Tar Hollow, 1952  
Photo: Rotunda Foundation

goodwill ambassador to the community. When he got to explaining that I would begin by appearing in a series of on-air radio and television interviews in which I would speak for one of the national fundraising charities, he had me.

My first appearance, on behalf of Christmas Seals was a week later on the late night disc jockey program broadcast by WTVN radio. I arrived at the radio station on Gay Street at about 11 p.m. At around 11:30 the interview began. The announcer that night wasn't prepared for the likes of me. Being not at all prone to leaving dead air, I spoke about JA as much as I did Christmas Seals. Although I did an excellent job, from a broadcaster's perspective, neither the JA board, nor the Tuberculosis Society was pleased.

To make certain that I would be far better prepared to speak effectively about the charity, Warren Parkinson arranged for me to attend an ongoing Dale Carnegie course in public speaking. In a matter of a couple of weeks, I had learned how to develop talking points and deliver on-message with or without an interviewer.

My next outing, at WCOL during drive time ( 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. ) was right on point. By the end of the year, I appeared one, or more, times on about every radio and TV station soliciting folks

to use and pay for their Christmas Seals. I loved the attention, and reveled in the compliments on how well I projected the solid values and work ethic central to the Junior Achievement program.

In February, I was deeply engaged in Senior Carnival activities which was the principal fund raiser for Senior Class Trips. One evening, I received a call at home from one of the directors at WBNS-TV. His name was John Haldi, program director at channel ten. Haldi would go on to become the general manager of the television station. In early 1954, however, we didn't know one another.

"I heard you a couple of times on the radio," he began. "Do you know anything about science?"

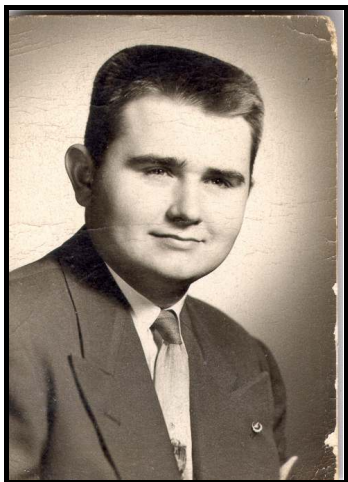
"Yes – although it's mostly in the areas of electronics and nuclear physics."

"Do you know as much about atomic energy as you do about Christmas Seals?" he might have asked, but whatever it was he said, he wanted me to come down to the station to meet him. He clearly did not know that he had probably seen me many times around the TV station.

When I showed up, all he talked about was the program. The Chope Brothers had started a new company, called Industrial Nucleonics, to build specialty instruments based on atomic radiation. To make measuring equipment based on atomic energy, it seemed another new invention in the news, the transistor, would be needed. The WBNS-TV special would combine the two technologies in one program.

The early tests using me alone on the set were not very good. I was prone to show off what I knew, and the purpose of the program was to show off what Bert Chope knew. When I was asked to suggest a girl my age who might be interested in appearing on the program, I immediately suggested another member of our JA company. She was exactly what Paul Yokham wanted.

The Program was broadcast live and largely unscripted. Our part in the broadcast was to participate in demonstrations of the newly discovered transistor with two of its developers from



Robert's Graduation Photo  
June, 1954

Bell Labs. Then, in the second half-hour, we helped to demonstrate how Industrial Nucleonics ( a Columbus Company ) was applying atomic radiation to streaming measurement systems for use in manufacturing. Although the technology we showed was for paper making, the company's AccuRay system was soon used in the manufacture of cigarettes, tires, rolled steel and other continuous process industrial products.

### **Margaret Willis' Conundrum**

About a week before our class was to leave on it's Senior Trip – to Washington, Williamsburg and New York – Margaret Willis called me into her office. Our relationship had warmed considerably since my autumn quarter clearance problem. Although my outside activities remained very high, I kept the promises I made to her. She responded positively and encouraged me to further develop my interests and activities – especially in the areas of writing and people relationships.

Although Margaret Willis could be tart, judgmental and blunt, she could be engaging and attentive when she wanted something. On this April afternoon, I saw the engaging side of Margaret Willis. She wanted something. She may have been the major-domo in her University School domain, but outside of school, she was dependent on her powers of persuasion to keep her charges under control. I don't know what experiences she may have had on previous Senior Trips, but it was soon clear to me that

she had doubts about controlling the least socialized of her testosterone driven male students once we left Columbus.

She had decided to change the rooming assignments, she told me. I would not be rooming with Bill McCormick or Keith Bemis or Dick Evans. She had decided to assign me to room with my friend, Kiefer Newman, as well as Sammy Fountas and Dave Gallagher. She wasn't asking me to change, she was informing me that she had made the change. Given my cooperative nature, maturity and strong leadership skills, she thought it better that I room with boys I could help her to keep in line. My wants and needs, and the plans made ahead of time for shared activities with others didn't matter. She had made up her mind.

When I complained and expressed some resistance to her plan, she told me I could easily make plans to be with Bill and Keith, but the rooming assignments were now final. I was very unhappy. It's wasn't that I didn't like any of the boys she wanted me to room with, for one of them, Kiefer, was one of my best friends. The issue was that she wanted to use me as something of a chaperon. This was my senior trip – and I wanted to do the things that had been in planned for months and with the people I wanted to room with.

The next morning I was so upset that I told Willis that I would not go on the trip if I couldn't room with Bill as planned. She was abrupt and unyielding. If that was my decision then best I stay home, she assured me. We were both angry at one another that day. There seemed to be no one I could share my problem with so I felt very isolated and angry. I was determined to stay home – not because I wanted to, but because I knew it would force the issue into the open.

A day or so later, Margaret Willis asked me to come by her office after school. I was ready to explode in anger and disappointment when school ended that day. When I arrived at her office she was neither icy toward me, nor condescending. I was boiling in anger, and worried at what my planned explosion might cause for me later. Years later, Margaret Willis and I would remember this

incident. I re-lived it many times and still remember it today. My best recollection of what was said that day goes something like this:

“Bob, I don’t think we communicated very well with one another about the rooming assignments. I’m disappointed that you’re so angry about this – and, I suppose, some of that anger may be due to how I handled the matter last time we talked. I should have made it clear that I need your help – and that I have come to trust you and to respect your abilities at getting people, teachers and other students, to go along with your ideas and plans.

“The fact is that there are several boys in this class who are difficult to control. What I’ve not told you is that I’m concerned that I may not be able to maintain control on this trip. Boys your age can be rebellious and get into trouble easily. If I can’t control them neither will the other faculty members be able to do so. I’ve thought about this a good deal – and I need your help. I need someone in the room with Dave and Sammy who can steer clear of trouble. And I need someone along on this trip who the students trust and respect to help me keep any troublemakers in line.”

I was moved by Margaret Willis that afternoon – for I saw her, for the first time, as a person, not an omnipotent icon. I had never imagined that she ever had any doubts about anything, and here she was confiding in me that she had doubts about her own abilities to deal with some fifty rambunctious youngsters in far away places and uncertain situations.

I agreed to her plan. It was one of the best decisions I ever made. None of the boys I roomed with got into any trouble or caused any problems. Margaret Willis gave me full credit for having done an important and difficult job. I reveled in her attention and compliments, but I have no recollection of having done anything. Bill and I still shot pictures, and lusted after the girls on the boat trip down the Chesapeake Bay. Keith and I helped to maneuver Miss Willis into the stockades at Williamsburg. When we finally arrived in New York, Kiefer and I called Louis Armstrong’s wife and arranged a visit to their home.





1954 Little Buckeye Cheerleaders { L - R }  
Helen Minton, Jeanette Edgar, Joyce Littlefield, Martha Ivens, Cathy Clark.  
Photo: OSU Archives

Margaret Willis went back to being an icon, but I would always know there was a young woman inside of her who possessed great wisdom about life and the world around us. After University School closed in 1967, Willis returned to her childhood home to live with her widowed sister Elizabeth. I visited them several times at their Mount Vernon, Washington estate. Margaret would take me around Skagit County's tulip fields in her venerable Mercedes and question me for hours about my adventures overseas and the interesting and famous people with whom I worked and played.

She had changed my life that year, and I made sure she knew the important role she played in all of our lives.

### **Achiever of the Year**

Bill McCormick, Dick Evans and I spent a third, profitable year in the Junior Achievement program. By our senior year, Dick Evans had created for himself a solid reputation for business dealings and personal integrity. He was our class treasurer until he was named by the Student Council to become school treasurer. He was so good at typing that he was selected by French teacher Ed Allen to produce his doctoral dissertation. On top of all of this, Dick was again the business manager for our Junior Achievement company.



Edward J. Coughlin presenting  
Achiever of the Year Award to  
Robert Butche at the Ohio Union, May, 1954.  
Photo: OSU Archives

In addition to being Senior Class president, Bill McCormick was an officer of our JA company, and our most valuable on-air talent. He also served as announcer for our school radio program, Buckshot, on WOSU, entertained and sang at school events, and played the lead in the spring musical production, Brigadoon.

Between serving as media spokesman for JA and the national charities my appearance on the WBNS-TV special, and an increasing number of engagements Bill and I had on other WOSU broadcasts, I was constantly on the go. What's more, my experiences in the Dale Carnegie course had given me new skills at organizing my thoughts and new poise and self confidence in public speaking situations.

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1954, Edward J. Coughlin, a Lazarus executive and chairman of JA's Schools and Achievers Committee sent the following letter to University School director, Paul Klohr.

Dr. Dr. Klohr

The final meeting of all of our Junior Achievement companies will be held this week. Robert Butche, a three-year Achiever was selected as the Outstanding Senior Boy Achiever for the 1953-54 program year. Robert has actively participated in J.A. since he first enrolled and we have found him to be a very capable young man. We are very proud to have students like him members of J.A.

Edw. J. Coughlin, Chairman  
Schools and Achievers Committee



## Twelfth Grade Reports

### Autumn Quarter

*Margaret Willis,  
November 17, 1953*

Because it is so important that a student work consistently and purposefully during his senior year, The University School always sends a letter about all twelfth graders soon after the middle of the fall quarter. At a recent meeting of the upper school faculty, the progress, problems, and needs of the various seniors were discussed. This early report is intended to help all of us, students, parents, and teachers, to coordinate our efforts to make this year the most successful one possible for each student.

Bob's academic work got off to a bad start because of the complications in getting out the football brochure. This, in combination with football after school, has made his situation in Special Mathematics rather bad at the moment. Mr. Schaaf writes:

Bob elected Special mathematics even though he has not taken Algebra II. I was willing for him to take this course under the following conditions: (1) he would consult me regularly for any extra help needed, (2) he would hand in his assignments regularly.

So far he has not made any appointments with me for consultations and he has been lax in handing in his assignments. Bob has made a greater effort in getting in his assignments during the past two weeks than he had previously. Nevertheless, it will take a considerable effort on his part for him to clear this quarter.

Bob reads very well, and since the bad first two weeks, he has kept up satisfactory work in American History. He is, of course, very much interested in Radio Speech, and is consistently good in the things which interest him. Mr. Boyd comments as follows on his participation in School Publications.

Bob has worked hard but needs to avoid attempts to dominate group work. Should learn to make contributions with others without giving impressions of being completely superior to them.

In general there seems to be no reason why Bob should not have a highly satisfactory year. But in order to achieve this he will need to be more consistent in meeting all his obligations, minor and unspectacular, as well as major ones. He will also need to give a great deal of attention to the finer points in technics of working with other people, students and faculty. On the basis of his attitudes and abilities, we expect him to succeed in doing this.

Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Willis  
Fred Schmieder  
TWELFTH GRADE COUNSELORS

## Winter Quarter

*Margaret Willis,  
Fred Schmieder,  
March 10, 1954*

The attached reports which were written entirely independently of each other give a pretty consistent picture of Bob's progress and problems. There are few if any problems mentioned which he does not recognize; in most cases he is trying to work on them as the reports frequently indicate. In general he appears to be having a very satisfactory senior year. We are not aware of anything which we need to consult you about in regard to Bob since he seems pretty well to know where he is going, but if there is anything you want to bring up, please feel free to call us to arrange a conference.

Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Willis  
Fred Schmieder  
TWELFTH GRADE COUNSELORS

### Core – Miss Willis and Mr. Schmieder

The senior class has carried on many different lines of activity in core. The unit during the first half of the year was Producer-Consumer Economics, followed during the rest of the year by a unit, just begun, on the understanding and appreciation of art, music, and literature. In addition to the study of units there has been a program of creative writing at regular intervals and of leisure reading. The class has also work on the senior play, "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay", on the senior carnival, and on a large amount of other class and school business.

Bob has been an interesting student in the senior core, and since he has learned to handle his time and his responsibilities, he has been doing some excellent work. His writing is very interesting, with few mechanical errors, and he is willing to try new forms. The experimental attitude runs through all his work, and he does not neglect the necessary critical evaluation of the results. He had given a good deal of study and thought to the problems of his responsibilities as vice-president of the class.

There have been times when I have been quite annoyed with Bob, feeling that he was barging ahead without adequate consideration for others. Bob has been so sincere in trying to straighten out these situations that I am convinced they are incidental and accidental, and that his basic concern is for good human relations. Improving human relations is a long time study, but I trust he will continue it long after he leaves here.

#### Student Publications – Mr. Boyd

The student publications class this year produces Buckaroo, the school newspaper, Scarleteer, our yearbook, and Buckeye Leaves, the literary magazine. Each student has experience with one or more of these publications in writing, editing, or producing the material. Whether additional work will be done on the Student Handbook this year has not been decided.

After an arrangement in the fall quarter which proved only moderately successful, we attempted to find a different way of helping Bob use his abilities in the student publications class. At present he is writing a series of articles about reactions to the school program by students, faculty, and observers. In this capacity he is working more or less as a free-lance reporter and is able to organize a rather long-range program. Bob's progress is good and he is learning not only to write more effectively but also to see the reasons behind many aspects of the schools' philosophy and purposes.



Senior Mathematics – Mr. Schaaf

Bob shows a good understanding of some of the topics we have studied. His understanding is poor in others. The reasons are his lack of background in algebra and his large number of absences from class. These gaps in his knowledge will probably be a handicap to him if he plans on enrolling in college mathematics classes. Bob has a type of inquiring mind which should be an asset to him throughout his life. He also wants to do big things but he doesn't want to worry about details. I am not very satisfied with the progress Bob has made.

American History – Miss Willis

Bob has done much better as the year has gone on in keeping his various activities from interfering with each other or making his work late. This will continue to be a problem for him, but I believe he is learning how to work on it. It will be important for him to realize that he must keep on working and learning to plan time if he is to keep all responsibilities under control.

In the field of history Bob has good basic understanding, handles data well, and is able to see relationships between facts and movements. His work on the earlier periods of history has been somewhat perfunctory, as his interests are basically contemporary. During the rest of the year we will be dealing with the twentieth century, and I am hoping to see improvement in depth of understanding and scholarship, a change from satisfactory to excellent.

Radio-Speech – Miss Stewart

The class is at present engaged in writing and producing the school radio show, Buckshot. In addition to this we have been working on interviewing and reading.

There is little I can add to the reports in this area which I have written over the past three years. He has demonstrated the ability in this field in countless ways and has made an outstanding service contribution to the school. Probably the one area in which

Bob needs to continue to work in human relations' he needs to learn to delegate authority instead of assuming the whole load. I'm confident that Bob can find success in the field of radio if that is his choice as a profession.

## Senior Statement

**Robert William Butche**  
**Member of the Class of 1954**  
**The University School of the Ohio State University**

The faculty of the University School presents to you this Senior Statement upon the successful completion of our school curriculum. We hope that our judgements, formed through close association with you during all your school years, may be of value in whatever you undertake in the future.

There has been steady growth on your part, not only in quality and extent of accomplishments, but in habits of work and social attitudes. You possess a seriousness of purpose, and you have raised your standard of accomplishment in all areas, though perhaps not to the full extent of your ability except in the field of your major interest. Willingness to accept criticism and persistence in work have brought you that measure of success which should encourage you in new endeavors. We urge you to continue to study other people and try to understand and identify their wishes. You have steadily gained insight into better ways of working with people, and we hope you will continue to give thought and attention to this important phase of your development.

Your academic growth has been characterized by self-confidence, independent thinking, and a willingness to express your ideas. In radio activi-

## Growing Up In University School

ties your success has been outstanding. You have demonstrated the ability to write well and have made a sincere effort to improve study habits and to perform efficient work. We are confident that you possess the background knowledge and skill prerequisite to work on the college level. We therefore recommend you to the college of your choice.

Our comments and suggestions are given with a sincere desire for your continued success and happiness. Our best wishes go with you.

Signed, as Representative for the Board of Trustees,  
Howard L. Bevis, President, The Ohio State University

Signed, as Representative for The Faculty,  
Paul R. Klohr, Director, University School.



Margaret Willis with her 12<sup>th</sup> Graduating Class  
Browning Amphitheater, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1954

Photo: OSU Archives

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